

ROBIN'S READINGS.

Part 1.

THE ADVENTURES OF PADDY M'QUILLAN.

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BELFAST:

R. CARSWELL & SON, LIMITED, QUEEN STREET.

The Adventures of Paddy M'Quillan.

HIS CHRISTMAS DAY.

YIN Christmas Day A thocht A wud gang tae Bilfast an' spen' a wheen hooers there. A had niver seen the place, an' A had been savin' up a' ma happens fur a guid while, so that A wud be able tae enjy mysel'. A put on my new claes, an' startit' fur the train.

A saw naebody that A kenned till A got tae Bilfast. Waens, dear, it's a big toon that! An' an awfu' place fur spendin' money. Ye cud har'ly get ower the lang Brig afore layin' oot a saxpence. Whun A got oot at the station-hoose, an' saw the crowds o' fowk rinnin' this road an' the tither road, A got that scaured fur feer o' loasin' mysel' that A had a noshin' o' lyin' doon ahint the station-hoose till the train wud be reddy tae birl back hame again. Hooan-iver, A pluckit up heart an' went oot tae the front daur. A seen sumthin' there that pleased me. A'm shair there wusnae less nor twunt y horses an' jauntin' cars. Some o' them wuz birlin' awa' wi' fowk on them, an' ithers wuz stannin' waitin'. A wuz aye terble fand o' horses, so A stud lukin' at them an' admirin' them. Behold ye, A hadnae stud glowerin' very lang till yin o' the drivers noddit at me, an' lauched.

A lauched back at him.

"A merry Christmas tae ye," sez he.

"The same tae you, sir," sez I, wonderin' in my ain min' hoo he kenned me.

"Diz yer mither know yer oot?" sez he.

"Oh, ded she diz," sez I.

"A hope she's in good health," sez he.

"Purty middlin', sir," sez I, "except that she's noo an' then bothered wi' the roomatics."

"Wull ye take a drive?" sez he, rubbin' the dust aff the cushions, fur feer they wud dirty my new claes.

"Oh, thank ye, sir," sez I, "it wud be ower muckle trouble, an' A'm weel used tae travellin'."

"Jump on," sez he; "it's no ivery day ye get a drive, an' Christmas only comes yince a yeer."

So A got on the car.

"Whaur tae?" sez he.

"Oh, jist whatever road yer gaun yersel'," sez I; "A'm nae wae particular—dinnae let me tak ye aff yer ain road."

"Weel," sez he, "the shaps are a' closed up, an' the toon luks like a Sunday; but if ye like A'll tak ye tae see the College, an' the Thayeter, an' some ither big buildins'."

"Whatever ye like, sir," sez I; "A wuz niver here afore."

A thocht A saw the chap lauchin' twa or three times till he had tae wipe the water oot o' his een, but then he wud say sumthin' funny, aither tae me or tae the horse, that made us a' lauch.

Sez I, as we want alang.

"Sir, what's the meanin' o' them riles laid through the streets? They jist luk like rileroads."

"Oh, deed," sez he, shakin' his heid, "there'll suin be nae wark fur the like o' me, fur the trains frae Newton, an' Bangor, an' Donaghadee an' ither places wull suin be rinnin' intae the toon an' drappin' the fowk whauriver they want tae stap."

Puir fellow! A thocht a peety o' him. A'm shair he wuz roarin', fur he put his hankerchy up tae his face, an' whun he tuk it doon agin it wuz like tae burst it wuz that rid.

"An A suppoas ye hae a wife an' femily?" sez I.

"Oh, deed A hae," sez he, "an' it's no easy to purvide fur them."

"Ay, man dear, it's ower ocht hoo muckle waens can eat," sez I.

"Ye wad say that," sez he, "if ye had seen them at their brekfast this mornin' afore A cum oot."

"Hoo mony hae ye?" sez I.

"The baker's dizen," sez he, "an' whun their ma an' me sits doon wi' them, that maks fifteen at the table. Weel, its a sicht tae see fifteen knives playin' dab at the yin prent o' butter! Och, anee, anee, it's no lang till it's oot o' sicht, A can tell ye."

"The dear man, that bates ocht!" sez I.

"Ye had a big day wi' the Freemasons a while back," sez he,

"Man, we had that," sez I, "it's a fine confederation an' A hae a great noshin' o' joinin' them. A'm tell't it's a gran' thing tae be a Mason."

"Ye'd better beleev it," sez he, winkin' at me an' lauchin'. "Whun yer a Mason ye may gang whaur ye like, an' get whatever ye want fur naething," sez he.

"Dae ye tell me that?" sez I. "Sang, A wud like tae ken some o' them. A believe the ticket-clerk at oor rileyway staishin is a Mason."

"Weel," sez he, "if ye had throw'd him the sign he micht a gien ye a free ticket."

"Man," sez I, "A wush A had kenned that. A suppoas ye daurnae show me the sign."

"Na, A daur not," sez he, "but if ye raily mean tae join the Masons, ye micht try the plan A'm gaun tae describe."

"A'll be for iver ableeged tae ye," sez I, "an it'll gang nae farder, ye may depend on't."

"Weel," sez he, "on account o' the family ye belang till, A'll trust ye, an' A'll shew ye whaur a ludge meets."

"And what's yer plan?" sez I.

"Tak yer richt knee," sez he, "an' hit the daur six times, as hard as yer able. If they dinnae apen it, tak yer tither knee an' hit the daur six times. Then, if a man apens it an' axes what ye want dae this," an' he laid doon his whup, an' put his left han' on the tap o' his heid, an' gruppit the point o' his nose wi' the tither han'. He made me dae that efter him.

"Then," sez he, "ye'll mebbe be axed what ye want."

"An' what wull A say or dae?" sez I.

"Jist revarse the sign," sez he, "pit yer richt han' on yer heid an' grup yer nose wi' the left."

"Weel, what nixt?" sez I.

"He'll likely luk as if he didnae unnerstan' ye, an' purtend tae shut the daur."

"Ar' what wull A dae then?"

"Pit yer fit inside an' say, 'It's a wat nicht that.' Then, if he apens the daur again, reach up yer han' tae his ear an' pu' it. That's what we ca' the grup."

"Pu' his ear!" sez I.

"Oh, ay," sez he, "but ye neednae tak' the ear wi' ye."

"An' what wull A dae then?" sez I.

"A daurnae tell ye ony mair," sez he. "The man wull show ye what comes nixt!—an' here we're at the College."

We had a dale mair talk that A haenae time tae tell ye. He tuk me through the hale toon, an' at last A said that A wudnae keep him aff his wark ony langer.

"Ye hae din verra weel," sez I, "an' A'm shair A'm muckle ableeged tae ye. The first time ye're in oor cuntry side, dinnae gang by athoot callin' an' we'll aye be able tae gie ye twa or three prittas an' a drop o' buttermilk at ony rate. Guid mornin' tae ye," an' A hel' oot my han' tae shake han's wi' him.

"Guid day," sez he, "an' A'll only cherge ye five shillins."

"Five shillins fur what?" sez I.

"Fur yer drive," sez he.

"Presarve me!" sez I, "didn't A think ye wur gien me a sail fur naethin."

"Oh," sez he, "ye maun wait till ye're a Mason afore A cud dae that. A wud cherge ye mair ony ye're gaun tae join."

"Weel," sez I, "A wush ye had a tell't me suiner, fur, indeed, indeed, a cannae spare the money. Wull ye tak twa shillin', sir?"

The end o' it wuz that A had tae pye him the five shillins, although it went tae my heart tae dae it; hooaniver, he cheered me up by tellin' me A wud mak' fair mair nor that if A got intae a Mason ludge.

A wuz gie an' hungry by this time fur A had tuk an early brekfast, an' jist by chance A saw a hoose whaur A had a noshin' A wud get sumthin' tae eat, an' in A went. The place wuz nearly fu' o' men eatin' as they wur fear'd o' missin' the train. A sut doon, an' a nice young lass cum up tae me, an' sez she,

"What'll ye hev, sir?"

"Oh, gie me prittas," sez I; "there's naethin' like prittas—cruffles, if ye please."

"Verra weel," sez she; "an' what wull ye tak wi' them?"

"A pickle saut," sez I, "if ye hae naethin' better."

"Oh," sez she, "we hae roast turkey, ham, chops, roast beef, an' mutton."

"Heth, it's weel fur ye," sez I, "its no a bad meat hoose yer in, ma lass!"

"Did ye say roast beef, sir?" sez she, lauchin'.

"Na," sez I, "A said ye wur in a brave meat hoose; but A wull tak' some roast beef."

"Lerge or small?" sez she.

"Oh, lerge, if ye please," sez I, an' awa' she went.

A thocht it wuznae a big lukin' denner that she brocht me, an' sez I :

" Is that a large roast beef, dear ?"

" Yes, sir," sez she ; " ye axed fur a large plate."

" Oh, the plate's big enouch," sez I ; " but it's the beef A'm gaun tae eat an' it's no very big. A'm gled A didnae order a sma' yin, fur A think A wud a needed a pair o' specs to see it."

A very suin cleened my plate. Then the lass cum back, an says till me.

" Wull ye hev ony desert ?"

" Ony whut ?" sez I.

" Desert," sez she.

" An' what's that ?" sez I.

" Why epple pie or rice, or plum puddin', or tappyyokey," sez she.

" Tappy what ?" sez I. " What's the name o' the last thing ?"

" Tappyyokey," sez she.

" A'll tak' sum o' that," sez I. It wuz rael nice, so it wuz.

" Hoo much is a' that ?" sez I, whun A had din.

" A shillin'," sez she ; " but pye at the daur."

There wuz anither terble purty lass in a wee box place, takin' the money. Jist as A pu'd the shillin' oot o' my pokit, the thocht struck me that this lass micht ken sumthin' aboot the Freemasons, an' that A micht get my denner athoot p'yin' fur it. So, A lauched in her face, an' pittin' yin han' on the tap o' my heid, A gruppit my nose wi' the tither.

" Ye ken what that means ?" sez I, fur A thocht by her smile that it wuz a' richt.

She shuk her heid, an' lauched at me.

" What !" sez I, " dae ye no unnerstan' that ?" an' A revarsed the sign.

She jist lauched the mair, so as A seen she kent naethin' aboot it. A peid my shillin' an' then went an' tuk a danner through the streets.

A wud niver be able tae tell ye a' that A sae, but A maun let ye hear aboot my visit tae a Mason ludge. Whun A cum tae the place the carman tell't me aboot, doon in Arther Square, jest furnenst the Theyater, A made my way up the stairs iver sae heech, an' A dunted the daur that hard that my knee dinneled. It wuz apened by a big man that had a beautifu' apron an' collar on him, shinin' like goold.

He lukit at me.

A make the sign.

"What dae ye want?" sez he.

"A'm a' richt," thinks I, an' wi' that A made the sign backwards.

He glowered at me as if A had been an escapit loonatic, an' A declare if A hadnae pit my fut in the daur he wud a shut it in my face.

"It's a wat nicht," sez I.

He lauched at that, an' seein' me pushin in he stoopit his heid doon as if he hadnae heerd me.

"It's a wat nicht," sez I, purty lood, thinkin' he wuz hard o' hearin', mebbe.

"Ye hae tell't me that twice," sez he, "but A want sumthin' else."

"Oh, weel," sez I, "A can gie ye the grup."

A wunnered shud A pu' it hard, so A got haud o' his ear. He gie a jump an' a gulder at me as if A had struck him. A wuz that nervish A nippit him ower hard. It wuz my turn to roar out nixt, fur the furst thing A felt wuz his shut fist atween my een. He sent me heid ower heels doon the stair, an' A seen mair stars nor A had seen fur a guid while. A gethered mysel' up, an' withoot iver lukin' ahint me, made fur the train, thinkin' in my ain min' that if A wanted intil a Mason ludge A wud hae tae set aboot it sum ither way.

It's wonnerfu' hoo news gets oot! A wusnae twa days hame till iverybuddy roon the hale cuntry side kent aboot my adventures in Billast, the visit tae the Freemason Ludge, an' iverything else. Jamey Menyarry an' a wheen o' the boys made sayries fun o' me, an' mony a time A cud not help loasin' my temper wi' them. Whuniver yin o' the fellas met me he wud begin mayin' like a goat, an' then he wud clap yin han' on his heid an' catch his nose by the tither.

HIS TRIP TAE GLESCO.

DID iver A tell ye about my trip tae Glesco? That wuz the biggest spree iver A had in my life.

Yin mornin' whun A wuz at my brekfast, sez I, "Ma, A'm thinkin' o' gaun frae hame a bit."

"It's no very far, A hope," sez she, "fur there's a guid wheen o' the pritties tae be riz yet, an' ye cannae be weel spared awa. Whaur ir ye gaun?"

"A'm gaun ower the shough tae Glesco," sez I.

"Ye're gaun tae the mischief," sez she.

"Whaur's that?" sez I; "if it's ony pert o' Glesco A'll be there, fur A mean tae see a' that's worth lukin' at."

"Ye'll no gang yin fit," sez she, "an' if ye persist in it A'll lock up yer claes."

"Weel, if de dae," sez I, "A'll gang an' list; A wull as shair as daith!"

A hadnae anither word tae say. Whuniver my ma refused me ocht, A jist threatened tae list, an' then A got whatever A wanted.

Puir buddy, she made as muckle preparations fur me as if A had been gaun tae Amerikay. She bakit aboot three griddle fu's o' hard breid, an' a hale lot o' soda an' pritta breid, an' then she put up a wee crock o' butter.

Sez I, "Ye dinnae mean me tae sterve, onyway."

"Oh," sez she, "yer gaun tae a gie cauld cuntry, an' ye'll no fin' mony in it as kin tae ye as yer auld ma."

"A'm very shair o' that," sez I, "an' A'll no forget ye whun A'm awa; hoo muckle money will ye gie me wi' me?"

"What'll pye yer passage, an' half-a-croon fur yer pokit," sez she.

"Ah, haud yer tongue!" sez I; "it'll tak' a cupple o' pun' at the least," sez I.

"Sorra a cupple o' pun' ye'll tak' there tae get robbed o'," sez she; "ye wudnae be lang there till ye wud be releaved o' yer money."

"Yer far ower hard on the Scotch folk," sez I: "A dinna beleeve they're half as bad as ye mak' them appear."

An' raily a wuz richt whun A said that, fur A deklare A met the nicest, kindest fowk in Glesco that iver A saw in my life. They're jist like oorsels, only they're a wee bit sherper, an' A think their hearts ir mebbe aboot twa inches farder doon than Irishmen's.

Weel, A got awa at last, but A didnae get very muckle money wi' me. My ma made a bargain wi' me that she wud gang intae the toon an' sen' me a money order. Puir buddy, whun A wuz startin' that day she roared like a waen.

"Paddy, dear," sez she, "A hope you'll no be drooned, but A hae a forebodin' that sumthin'll happen ye. It's gaun tae be a coorse nicht, an' A'll no sleep a wink fur thinkin' aboot ye."

"Hoots, woman!" sez I. "Cheer up, an' tell me what A'll bring ye frae Scotlan'."

"Oh, Paddy, jist bring me yersel' safe hame. Keep the middle o' the boat, dear, an' watch yer fit gettin' intil her. Guid bye, an' Guid bliss ye, watch the Scotch folk, an' dinnae be bringin' a wife hame wi' ye, or A'll pit ye baith oot," sez she.

A wuz red o' her at last, an' whun A got the length o' Bilfast. A made my wae doon tae the quay, an' bocht my ticket. My guidness, but yon's big boats! A dinnae ken hoo they mak' them ava. There maun be a gie lot o' timmer in them. A wasnae lang on the boat till they startit her, an' A declare they let her aff as aisy as A wud oor meer an' kert. Whun A saw the fowk and hooses movin' past me, my heart begood tae quiver, an' a lump got up in my throat. A went an' leaned ower the side o' the boat, an' the great big tears drippit doon intae the sea.

"Oh, ma, deer," sez I, "A'll mebbe niver see ye mair."

Wi' that A hears sumbuddy sayin'—

"Yer no sick a'reddy?"

Thinks I, "that's sum Scotch buddy, but it'll no be me he's speakin' tae," so A niver moved.

"Yer no sick a'reddy?" sez he agen, an' this time he touched me on the shooder.

Wi' that A birlid roon an' lukit at him. He wuz a Scotchman, ivery inch o' him, an' he had a thing on his heid as big as a griddle, wi' a tassel on the tap o' it. They ca' them Tam o' Shanter in oor cuntry.

"Hoo dae ye fin' yersel'?" sez he.

Sez I, " A didnae ken A wuz loast."

" Oh," sez he, " A mean hoo dae ye feel ?"

" Man," sez I, " A feel a' ower."

' A thocht a kenned ye whun a spauk tae ye," sez he, " an' A think A hae seen ye sumwhaur."

" A'm shair ye hae," sez I, " fur A'm there mony a time."

" Weel, ir ye gaun tae Glesco ?" sez he.

" A tuk a ticket fur it, onywae," sez I.

He tuk a big snuff-box oot o' his pokit, an' pit aboot the fu' o' a tay spoon up his nose ; then he hel' the box ower tae me an' tell't me tae tak a pinch.

" Na, thank ye," sez I, " A wull not."

" An' what fur, no ?" sez he ; man it's the very best."

" An' that's no sayin' very muckle fur it," sez I, " fur what's the best o' it but a pickle coffee an' grun gless that tickles yer nose an' maks ye sneeze."

" Ye hae a gie sharp tongue in yer heid," sez he.

" Very near as sherp as a Scotchman's," sez I, " but it's a cauld nicht," sez I, " an' A'll awa an warm mysel' ;" an' A startit aff tae anither pert o' the boat tae get red o' him.

" That's the wrang road," sez he.

" Dae ye ken whaur A'm gaun !" sez I.

" Na," sez he.

" An' hoo dae ye ken whuther it's the richt road or the wrang ?" sez I.

Sez he, " A thocht ye wur gaun tae the steward fur a gless o' toddy tae warm ye."

Whun A seen him sae ceevil A axed him if he wud eat a piece o' hard braid an' butter.

" A wull that," sez he, " fur A'm gettin' hungry wi' sniffin' the strong sea air."

" Oh," sez I, " ye'll sniff a dale o' that afore ye fatten on it."

A turned roon tae luk fur my bunnel, but jest wi' that the boat gied a heeve that nearly knockit me aff my feet, an' only fur Sanny (that wuz his name) A think A wud a fell. Then the boat gied a plunge forrit till the water flew ower her.

Sez I, " Whaur's the captain ?"

" What dae ye want wi' the captain ?" sez Sauny.

" There's ower muckle wecht in the front en' o' the boat," sez I, " an' he'll hae tae shift them kye tae the tither en'."

" Oh, there's nae danger," sez he.

" Weel, A hope no," sez I.

Wi' that the boat gied anither rowl that sent me on my han's an' knees.

" A wush A wuz hame," sez I. " Ma! Ma! A wush A had taen yer advice."

A saw Sauny blawin' his nose, an' A kenned it wuz only an excuse tae hide his lauchin' but A didnae heed him. He steppit ower nixt the side o' the boat, but A gruppit houl't o' him.

" Dinnae gang there!" sez I. " Keep a' the wecht in the middle o' her, or she'll capsize!"

A didnae min' ocht mair fur a guid while except that A wuz lyin' yin minit on my face an' the nixt on the braid o' my back, that sick that A didnae care the boat had gied down.

A'll niver forgit that nicht as lang as A leev. We reached Glesco at last, an' a gled sicht it wuz tae me. Sauny niver left my side the hale time, an' A declare A begood tae feel a likin' fur him.

" Ye'll be a' richt whun ye get yer brekfast," sez he, " Come awa wi' me till we get a snack, an' then if ye like A'll show ye a bit o' Glesco."

" Yer jist as dacent a man as iver A met," sez I, " an' if A said onything last nicht that offended ye, A beg yer pardon; A dae indeed."

" There's my han'," sez he; " A'm no yin bit angery, an' A'll no see ye stuck fur a freen in a strange cuntry; cum awa noo an' get yer brekfast."

" Man, Sauny," sez I, " A wuz niver as reddy fur my brekfast in my life. But tell me," sez I, " what'll we get. Diz the fowk here eat the same wae as in the Coonty Doon?"

" Weel," sez Sauny, " they eat purty much the same wae, A beleev, an' A daur say the vittels are verra near alike tae. But here we ir," an' wi' that he turned up a kin' o' entry that he ca'd a " close."

" Man," sez I, " it is a ' close,' shair eneuch; A can har'ly draw my breath!"

Wi' that he turned intae a hoose fur a' the wurl like what ye wud see in Princes Street, in Bilfast, fur A notised that the wunday wuz fu' o' bowls o' broth, pigs' feet, an' sheets o' sand-paper—A mean farls o' hard breid. A lump o' a barefitted lass, wi' her heid a' in a toother, cum up tae us an' stud glowerin' at me as tho' A had been sumthin' no canny.

"Weel, dear," sez I, "what wae is ye? Is the breakfast reddy yit?"

She niver spauk.

"Cum, lassie," sez Sauny, "niver min' Paddy. What hae ye reddy?"

"A hae sum parritch here in the luggy," sez she.

"A dinnae cum here tae sup parritch," sez I, "A get plenty o' them at hame. Get me a guid cup o' tay."

"And what wull ye tak' tae yer tay?" sez she. "Wull ye hae finnin haddie or kippered herrin?"

"What sorts that?" sez I. "A hae heard o' fresh herrin', saut herrin', Ardglass herrin', an' rid herrin', but A niver heard tell o' kippered herrin' afore. Let me see yin."

She run awa an' brocht in sumthin' atween her finger an' thoom, an' hel' it up afore my face.

"Tak it awa," sez I, "an gie me a bit o' beef; I dinnae like the luk o' it."

"Bring me a bowl o' brose," sez Sauny.

"A bowl o' what?" sez I.

"Pease brose," sez he; "ye ken that's Glesco goold in a refined state."

Weel, the lass brocht him a bowl o' the brose, an' the smoke o' it risin' tae the ceilin'.

"Wull ye taste it?" sez he, an' he reached me the fu' o' the big iron spoon.

"Oh, A'll try it," sez I, an' so A did, but the yin spoonful wuz eneuch fur me. It wuz waur than the "crowdy" my ma maks.

"Tak a taste mair," sez Sauny.

"Na, thank ye," sez I, "the spoon's ower big fur my mooth."

Sauny swin let me see that the Scotch fowk cud eat the same wae as we dae; by, my word, it wuz a caution tae see him at it. Whun he had finished his brose he fell tae the breid an' tay, an' in about twa minutes he had tae shout at the lass—

"Mair breid, mair breid, lassie!"

Whun he had finished the fifth cup he sez tae me, sez he --

"Ye see A drink a guid dale o' tay tae my breid."

Sez I, "Man ye dae that, an' ye eat a guid dale o' breid tae yer tay."

A cried the lassie in an' axed hoo muckle wuz tae pyc.

Sez she, "A'll gang ben an' speer."

" A dinnae want ' Ben ' nor his ' spear ' ether," sez I ; " it's yer bill A want."

" Orr Bill," sez she ; " ou, ay ; A ken yer meanin' ; Wully, we cal' him, but he's no in the noo."

" Yer a percel o' haythens !" sez I ; " this is as bad as the fellow an' the gridiron. Here, Sauny," sez I, an A throwed him doon a wheen shillin', " pye for what we hae et."

That left me very little money, fur, as A tell't ye, my ma wudnae gie me muckle wi' me, but she had promised tae sen' me an order on the Post Offis.

" Sauny," sez I, " is it far tae the Post Offis ?"

" Na, no very far," sez he. " Cum awa, an' A'll show it tae ye."

A used tae think Bilfast a gran' big place, but Glesco bates ocht iver A saw in my life. My ! the heecht o' the hooses ? An' the length o' the streets ! Sum o' them maun be ten miles A'm shair. A niver saw the likes o' it. An' it's as true as A m here but the trains rin ower the taps o' the hooses. They dae indeed ! An' Sauny tell't me ye wud get ridin' a wheen o' miles fur a penny.

" Noo, there's the Post Offis," sez Sauny, " an' A'll wait here till ye cum back."

A had sum bother gettin' tae the richt place, an' whun A did get there, as A didnae want iverybuddy tae ken my bizziness, A waggit my finger at yin o' the fellows, an' whun he cummed forrit tae me, sez I—

" That's a nice mornin', sir."

He noddit his heid.

" This is a gie big Post Offis by what we hae," sez I.

" What can A dee fur ye ?" sez he.

Thinks I. " Yer a prood sort o' chap, an' dinnae want tae hae ony crack wi' me."

" Hae ye a letter fur me ?" sez I.

" What name !" sez he.

" Sur ?" sez I.

" What's yer name ?" sez he.

" Patrick M'Quillan," sez I ; " or mebee she'll pit ' Paddy ' on it."

He wuznae lang till he pickit a letter oot o' a bunnel, an' brocht it ower tae me.

" Gie me echt Pence," sez he.

"What fur?" sez I.

"There's money in it," sez he.

A cleen lost my temper at that, fur A thoct he had apened it, knowin' me tae be a stranger in Glesco.

"Bad manners tae ye!" sez I, "fur an inquisitive Scotch buddy, hoo daur ye apen my letters? It's weel A cum sae suin or ye micht hae run awa wi' it. Nae winner ye fun' it fur me sae quick, whun ye ken sae muckle aboot it."

"What's this? what's this?" sez a fussy wee man cummin' forrit.

"It's that fellow there," sez I, "he haes a letter fur me, an' he maun hae stewed it ower the kettle an' apened it, fur he kens ther's money in it."

The chap wuznae a bit angry; he jist lauched an' flung the letter tae the tither man that had spauk tae me. He lifted it up an' sez he—

"Ay, there's money in it, an' it's no reejeestered; ye'll hae tae pye dooble reejeestry fee."

Weel, seein' that he wuz a ceevil lukin' man A didnae like tae say ony mair, so A gied him the echtpence, an' got my letter.

Whun A apened it there wuz an order in it fur three pun', an' there wuz a shillin' rowled up in a bit o' paper. What's the shillin' fur? sez I, so afore A went farder A read the letter, an' my ma said that Wully Kirk sent a shillin' fur me tae buy him a tabaka box in Glesco. A bocht him the box, but A beleev A made him pye me echtpence whun A went hame.

Weel, a man shewed me whaur tae get my money order changed, but A had tae stan' a lang time afore it cum my turn. Thinks I, "Noo, he'll hae a' the money pyed awa, an' mebbe A shud cum back agen," so A sez to the young man, sez I—

"Sir, A has an order here for three pun'; hae ye that muckle money in the hoose? Because," sez I, "dinna pit yerself aboot, an' A'll cum back the morrow."

He lauched at that, an' sez he—

"A cud pye three hunner as fast as three pun'."

"Is that a fact?" sez I. "Man, but Glesco's a fine place; why, doon at oor Post Offis, sum times ye cudnae get a postage stamp, an' at the Ballycuddy Rileway Station if ye offered a half sovereign fur yer ticket, ye wud hae tae stan' fur half-an-ooer, till they got in as muckle money as wud gie ye change."

"It's a queer place that," sez he. "Write yer name there," sez he, pointin' whaur A wuz tae sign. A wrote my name as weel as A cud, an' reached him back the paper.

"Wha sent ye this?" sez he.

"A frien' o' mine," sez I.

"What's their name?" sez he.

"Oh," sez I, "it's a' richt; a wunner what ye tak me fur."

He throwed it doon, an' begood tae serve ither fowk.

"Noo," sez I tae myself, "that jist serves me richt fur bein' sae free wi' the fowk; the imperence o' the fellow tae axe me wha sent it. A'll no tell him yin bit."

Efter A stud a guid while, A sez, whun he got slack—

"Ir ye gaun tae gie me that money, boy?"

"Ay, whun ye tell me wha sent it," sez he.

"Deed an' a'll jist no please ye," sez I, "an' if ye say muckle mair A'll gang fur a pleeceman."

"Cum here," sez he; "wur ye born in Timbuctoo?"

"Na, A wuz not," sez I, "A wuz born at hame."

"A see," sez he, "Weel, it's the rule o' the offis that ye maun tell wha sends the money afore A daur pye ye."

"Oh, weel," sez I, "A beg yer pardin; my ma sent it."

He lauched frae ear tae ear.

"What's her name though?" sez he.

"Mary," sez I, "Mary M'Quillan."

Then he lukit at the paper again, an' sez he—

"Ye dinnae spell yer name richt."

"Noo," sez I, "dinnae provoke me ower far! Hoo dae ye ken what wae A shud spell my name?"

"Ye dinnae spell it the same wae as yer mither," sez he.

"Oh," sez I, "it wuz the faut o' the bad pen ye gied me; nae-buddy cud spell richt wi' that pen; sum drunk buddy haes been writin' wi' it, an' there's no as muckle ink in yer bottle as wud droon a new born flea."

A got my money at last, but afore A gang through the same bother again A'll carry a wheen pun' in my pokit.

"Cum awa," sez Sauny, "till A buy a pair o' shoon, an' then A'll tak ye twa or three places wurth lukin' at."

"A wull dae that," sez I, "wha's yer shoemaker?"

"Alick Rabertson, o' sayventy-fower, Croon Street," sez he, "yin o' the dacentest men in Glesco, an' the only man that cud iver fit me."

A luckit doon at Sauny's feet, an' A thocht tae myself that it wud be nae easy jab tae fit him. He had a pair o' the biggest feet A iver seen on man or wuman.

"Diz he cherge ye muckle mair nor a man wi' ordinary sized feet?" sez I.

"Na, no yin bit," sez he, "an' min ye, A hae a couple o' brave insect crushers."

"Beetle crushers, ye mean," sez I, "Man, Sauny, if A had ye at my place, A wud niver pit a rowler on the grun, fur ye cud jest tak a danner ower the fields, an' flettin' ivery clod wi' yer feet."

"Yer verra sair on me," sez Sauny, "but here we ir," an' he steppit intae a nice shoe shap.

Mister Rabertson wuz verra kin' an' ceevil. A bocht a pair mysel' an' they wur a darlin' fit.

Then we went an' had a lang walk. Sauny shewed me Paddy's Market an' the Saut Market an' Glesco Green, an' a lot o' places that A forget the names o'. My, it's a wunnerfu' place that Glesco!

We dannered alang lukin' at this thing an' the tither, an' glowerin' in the shap wundeys. A saw sum nice cotton hankercheys in a shap, an' sez I—

"Sauny, stan' there a minnit or twa till A buy my ma a hankerchey."

A stepit intae the shap, an' a nice lukin' well-dressed man cum up tae me, an' sez he—

"Weel, sur, what can we dae fur ye the day?"

Sez I, "A want tae see if ye have ony nice coloured hankercheys."

"Lots o' them," sez he, an' wi' that he taks me up tae the coonter, an' sez he tae a big, fat, lazy lukin' fellow that wuz stannin' wi' a yerdstick in his han', sez he—

"Mister M'Allister, shew this gentleman sum o' yer coloured hankercheys," an' then he went awa tae speek tae sumbuddy else.

A saw the big fellow lauchin' whun the mesterman ca'd me a "gentleman," an' sez he, glowerin' at me frae head tae fit—

"What colour wud ye like?" sez he.

"Rid, if ye please," sez I.

"Is it fur yersel'?" sez he.

"Na," sez I, "it's fur my ma; she likes tae rowl a hankerchey roon her heid in the mornin's, an' she'll be pleased if A tak her hame yin frae Gleasco."

"Weel, there's a nice yin," sez he, throwin' doon a tartan thing, an' A notised him winkin' at the tither chaps. A saw he wanted tae tak a rise oot o' me, so A shuk my held, an' sez I—

"Na, that yin's no jist rid eneuch."

"Weel, A'll shew ye sumthin' better," sez he, an' wi' that he flung doon a flamin' orange yin.

"That's gie an' near the thing," sez I, "but it's no jist the shade that A want yit."

As shair an A'm here but the nixt yin he threw doon wuz a' white but the border.

"A'm shair that'll please ye," sez he.

"Man, it wull that," sez I, "What's the price o' it? But bliss me," sez I, "what a quer smell it haes!"

"Smell!" sez he, an' wi' that he put his nose doon tae the coonter.

That wuz jist what A wanted.

"Noo," thinks I, "my boy, A'll learn ye tae mak fun o' me,"; so jist as he stoopit forrit A laid boult o' his ears, an' if A didnae gie his nose twa or three gie sherp dunts agen the coonter my name's no Paddy M'Quillan! The bluid floc out o' it a' ower the hankerchey, an' it wuz rid eneuch then.

"Dae ye ken the colour A want noo?" sez I, "because if ye dinnae, that's it!" A turned roon an' steppit oot like a lord, an' A seen the fellows in the shap lauchin' till they wur haudin' their sides.

Whun A went oot Sanny saw that A wuz a wee bit excited lakin', an' he axed me what wuz wrang.

"Oh," sez I, "yin o' them coonter-happer buddies wuz tryin' tae tak a rise oot o' me, but A believe his nose feels bigger than iver it did afore, an' his ears'll no cool fur a wee bit."

Then A tell't him aboot it. A had hardly din speekin' whun sumbuddy tippit me on the shoulder. A birlid roon, an' there wuz the very boy A had haen the row wi'.

"What dae ye want?" sez I, "Dae A owe ye onything?"

"Ye dae not," sez he, "but A'm sumthin' in your debt."

"Weel," sez I, "be quick an' pye me, for A want my denner."

Sez he, "A hae a guid min' tae threash ye while there's a hale bane in yer buddy!"

"Is that a fact?" sez I; "what wages hae ye?"

"What dae ye want tae ken that fur?" sez he.

"Because," sez I, "if ye dae what ye say A'll gie ye a week's wages an' the price o' the hankerchey A spoiled intae the bargain."

"A want nae fechtin' wi' ye," sez he; "but if ye dinnae apologise A'll gie ye in charge."

"Ye'll what?" sez I, "If ye stan' there much langer A'll sen' ye hame that yer mither'll no ken ye."

Sauny pookit my coat-tail, an' sez he—

"Here's a peeler."

"That's nae peeler," sez I, as a great big, lang fellow, that A tuk tae be a fireman, cum steppin' up wi' white gloves on him.

"Move on oot o' that," sez he.

"Move on yersel," sez I, "awa an' throw water on yersel'!"

Sauny tuk tae his heels an' A made efter him. A wush ye had a heerd the clatter o' thon peeler's big feet efter us. He was far ower soople for us, an' afore we had went twuntty yerds he gruppit me by the back o' the neck an' hel' me like a vice.

"That's richt," sez M'Allister, "tak him tae the offis, for he haes maist killed me, an' A'll sweer my life agen him."

Tae the offis they tuk me shair eneuch, an' only that Sauny went an' got a frien tae bail me, a wud been lockit up a' nicht. There wuznae muckle sleep for me A can tell ye, an' A wuz up gie an' early the nixt mornin'.

"Try an' tak yer brekfast," sez Sauny, "for ye'll mebbe be kep' a' day in the coort."

"Weel, weel," sez I, "get me a drap o' guid tay, an' A'll eat a piece o' my ain breid an' butter till it."

A wush ye had seen the tay they brocht in.

Sez I, "Sauny, that's Scotch tay, A suppoas. A wunner what my ma wud say if she seen that. Wait till ye cum tae Coonty Doon, an' she'll gie ye a cup that strong that it wud bend yourspoon tae stir it."

"Weel," sez Sauny, "A suppoas ye'll no ca' what yer drinkin' very strong."

"Strong!" sez I; "why, man, luk at it; it haes harly strenth eneuch tae rin oot o' the pot."

* * * * *

Whun we went tae the coort, A felt mysel' a bit nervish an' floostered like, but Sauny whuspered tae me—

" The heid Bailyee's a verra ceevil buddy, an' he'll no' be hard on ye."

" Whae dae ye mean ?" sez I, " is it a man on the bench ?"

" Ay," sez he, " the middle yin ; A ken him richtly."

" An' is it ' Bailyee ' they ca' him ?" sez I.

A made up my min' tae ask him if he wur ony frien tae Rabert Bailyee o' Ballyviggis Mill.

It wuz twa hoors afore my case cum on. The shapman had a returney engaged, an' the story he tell't wuz nearly enouch tae hang me. Whun he had din they got me up an' begood tae catechise me a' sorts. A tell't my wae o' the story like a man, an' A thenk Mr. Bailyee beleaved me, frae his menner.

" Whaur dae ye cum frae, my man ?" sez the returney.

" Frae the Coonty Doon," sez I.

" Dae ye wush ye had stied there ?" sez he.

" Na," sez I, " A dae not ; A wud niver hae made yer acquaintance if A had stied at hame."

" Yer inclined tae be funny," sez he, " but tell me, noo, what brocht ye tae Glesco ?"

" Weel, sur," sez I, " it wuz a big boat they ca' the ' Buffalo.' "

" Cum, sur," sez he, " what business had ye tae cum here ?"

" A suppoas," sez I, " A jist cum tae see the place."

" Hoo dae ye leev ?" sez he.

" A leev richtly," sez I.

" Answer the questyun !" sez he.

Sez I, " A dinnae understan' ye ; dae ye mean what dae A eat ?"

" A mean hoo dae ye get yer breid ?" sez he.

Sez I, " My ma bakes the maist o' it, but noo an then we get a bit o' white breid frae the baker."

Man if ye had heerd the fellows in the gellery lauchin'.

" Cum, cum," sez yin o' the megistrates, " don't ye understand the questyun ? He means—How dae ye get along in the world, how do you do ?"

" Purty weel, thank yer honour," sez I.

" Wha ir ye at all ? sez the megistrate in the middle.

" A'm a very dacent man," sez I, " an' A ken a frien o' yours that wud gie me a richt guid kereckter if he wuz here."

" What's that ?" sez he.

Sez I, " A beleeve yer name's Bailyee, sur ; ir ye onything tae Rabert Bailyee that warks in the mill at Ballyviggis ?"

A think he wuznae plesed at me for makin' sae free wi' him, for he niver ansered me, but begood tae read a book he had afore him.

"A doot, my man," sez the returney chap, "ye hae been drinkin' this mornin'."

A hung doon my heid at that.

"Cum, noo," sez he, "tell the truth; wur ye drinkin' this mornin'?"

"Weel, sur, A wuz," sez I.

"Speak up," sez he, "tell the Coort what ye wur drinkin'."

"TAY!" sez I.

"Are ye shair it wuz tay," sez he.

"No very," sez I, "but they tell't me it wuz a' they hae in this cuntry for it."

"But hadn't ye sumthin' in yer tay?" sez he.

"What dae ye mean?" sez I.

"Oh, yer very innocent," sez he; "ye ken sumtimes fowk tak sumthin' in their tay; noo, wusn't there sumthin' strong in yours?"

"Sumthin' strong?" sez I; "there wuz a metal spoon in it that wud amaist dae ye for a coal shovel."

"Really this maun be stappit," sez the heid megistrate.

"Weel, Mr. Bailye," sez I, "it's no my faut; he wants tae mak it appear that A wuz takin' drink, but it's as he leads his life he judges his neighbours; an' it wuz nae drinkin' buttermilk made his nose sae rid, onyway—beggin' yer pardin', sur."

"Niver mind my nose, sur!" says the returney.

"Dinna be scaured," sez I, "A'll no meddle wi' it. A wudnae like tae haud a pun' o' gunpooder near it, onywae."

"Weel, noo," sez he, "let's get on. Ye say yer frae the Coonty Doon; hae ye a ferm there?"

"My ma haes a wee bit o' grun," sez I.

"An' a fine hoose?" sez he.

"Weel, it's no a bad hoose," sez I, "it's as like the yin you wur reared in as ocht iver ye saw."

"Why, ye appear tae ken me," says he, "ah, noo yer cumin' roon," and he pu'd up his shirt neck, an' lukit a' roon the coort; "cum, noo," sez he, "describe the hoose tae us."

"Oh, it's no ill tae dae that," sez I; "it sits on aboot three square yerds o' grun, an' ye cud pit yer han' doon the chimley an' tak the bar oot o' the daur."

If ye had heerd the fowk in coort whun A said that !

Sez the megistrate, sez he—

" Mr. M'Guirk, A'm afeerd ye've met yer match, an' the time's being wasted," sez he.

" Beggin' yer pardon, sur," sez I, " A'm in nae hurry sae lang as A get awa hame the nicht."

" A mean ye tae spend a wheen months in jail, my frien'." sez the returney.

" What fur ?" sez I.

" Fur yer abuse o' my client," sez he.

" Yer worship," sez he, " he tuk my respected client by the ears an' hemmered his nose wi' impunity."

" A did naethin' o' the kin'," sez I. " A had naethin' in my hands ava, an' A nother tuk a hemmer nor an 'empunity' tae him ; A jist gied his nose a dunt or twa on the coonter, an' he deserved it, fur he wuz tryin' tae mak fun o' me."

" Dismiss the case !" sez the heid megistrate.

" Lang life tae yer honor, an' guid luk till yer tired o' it," sez I. " A kent richtly ye wur a frien o' Rabert Baillyee's, fur he wud jist a din the same thing."

Esither A left the coort A made up my min' tae start fur hame that verra nicht.

" Sauny, my man," sez I, " A'm gaun hame ; A think A hae got my fill o' Glesco, an' my ma wull be thinkin' lang tae see me."

" Weel, Paddy," sez he, " A'll be sorry whun ye gang, an' A hope ye'll sen' me a wheen lines noo an' then."

" A wull dae that, Sauny," sez I, " an' mebbe A'll cum back nixt year tae see ye."

That nicht saw me oot on the braid ocean, wi' naething but watter roon me, an' the sky aboon my heid, an' A wud hae gien a guid dale tae a fun mysel' safe an' sound at my ain fireside. It wuz a nice quate nicht, an' A wuz dannerin' back an' forrit on the wuden flair o' the boat, whun a brave guid-lukin' man, wi' a goold band roon his cap, an' a nice blue jacket on him, cum up alangside o' me. A had seen him mony a time up on a heech place, jist like a roost ; awa up whaur the boat's chimleys ir, an' heerd him givin' orders tae the sailors, an' A said tae mysel' that it beat tae be the captain. Weel, what dae ye think but he cum up tae me, an spauk tae me, an' sez he—

" It's a nice quate nicht that."

" It's jist that, sur," sez I.

" Ir ye a seafarin' man ?" sez he.

" Na, sur, A em not," sez I, " A wuz niver on the watter in my life till the nicht A cum across here tae Glesco."

" A think A hae min' o' seein' ye," sez he. " Ye wur a weethin' seek that nicht ?"

" A wuz mair nor a weethin'," sez I; " man, A wuz that bad A didnae care that the boat had went tae the bottom."

" Ay, it wuz a bit rough that nicht," sez he.

" It wuz a perfect hurrican," sez I, " an' it's a winner tae me that ye tak yer boats oot on sich nights."

" Ye ken little aboot it," sez he. " We're oot sumtimes whun the water's dashin' ower the funnels."

" Wharabouts is the funnels ?" sez I.

" Them chimleys," sez he, " that ye notis the smoke comin' oot o'."

" Man, the boat wull be rowlin' aboot terbly on a nicht like that," sez I.

" Ay, it wud tak ye busy tae keep yer feet," sez he.

" Hev ye nae wae o' kep'in' her study ?" sez I.

" A doot no," sez he.

" A wuz thinkin'," sez I, " that if ye wud mak' a' the fowk stae in yin place, an' no rin' aboot sae muckle, that it wud be better."

He laughed at that.

" A hope we'll hae nae storm the nicht," sez I, " we'll be in Billaast suin eneuch, an' there's no yin bit use in wastin' yer coals an' weerin' oot yer boat; so dinnae drive her ower hard."

" Oh, ye neednae be yin bit afear'd," sez he.

" Ir we near Paddy's Milestone yet ?" sez I.

" We hae a guid bit tae gang yit afore we're at it," sez he. " Did ye no abserve it as ye wur comin' ower ?"

" Na," sez I, " A wuz that seek A cud see naethin'."

" We'll be in sicht o' it in half-an-hoor," sez he.

" Weel, keep a guid bit aff it," sez I, " fur A'm tell't it's a very dangerous pert."

A declare he wus the nicest conversible man iver A seen.

" Wur ye iver wreckit, sur ?" sez I.

" A wuz," sez he, " three times."

" My guidness !" sez I, " an' war ye no drooned ony o' the times ?"

" Na," sez he, " A aye escapit wi' my life."

"Man, dear, but that wuz a mercy," sez I; "an' whaur wur ye wreckit?"

"The first place wuz among the ice bags in the Antick Ocean," sez he.

"Ice bags!" sez I, "it's a doonricht shame for fowk tae pit them there. It's waur than throwin' orange skins on the street for fowk tae slide on."

"The ship wuz crushed tae pieces," sez he.

"A niver beerd ocht like that!" sez I. "An' hoo did ye escape?"

"A got ontill a big ice bag," sez he, "an' stied there till anither boat pickit me up."

"Whaur wur ye wreckit the nixt time?" sez I.

"We wur awa in the Rid See," sez he, "an' yin nicht the mate discovered a leak in the bottom o' the boat."

"An' what herm cud a leak dae her?" sez I.

"A dinnae mean a gerden leak," sez he; "there wuz a hole in her that let in the watter, an' we ca' that 'a leak.'"

As true as A'm here he wuz the nicest spaukin' man iver A talkit tae!

"An' hoo did ye git aff?" sez I.

"We workit at the pumps," sez he, "fur three days' an' then we tuk tae the boats, an' reached the land, efter bein' nearly sterved."

"Isn't that whaur they catch the rid herrins?" sez I.

"Whaur?" sez he.

"A'm tell't," sez I, "that they a' cum frae the Rid See."

He lauched ower ocht.

"Whaur wur ye wreckit the nixt time?" sez I.

"The third time," sez he, "we run ashore at Greenland."

"Wuz it at the Icy Mountains?" sez I.

"Very near them," sez he, lauchin'.

My but he wuz a nice ceevil speekin' man!

"Wull ye tak a taste o' sumthin'?" sez he.

"What wud it be?" sez I.

"Ocht ye like," sez he, "frae ginger-ale tae shampain, but A tak nae drink mysel'."

"Na, thank ye a' the same, sur," sez I. "A didnae tak ony stimilatin' lickers; an' A think ye shudnae hae onythin' o' the kin' on yer boat. Mony a guid boat, A'm tell't, has been loast jist wi' haen drink in her."

" It's ower true," sez he, an' he touched his hat tae me, an' went awa doon the stair.

It wuz a lang nicht, an' A wuz gie an' gled nixt mornin' tae see Bilfast. A tuk the furst train A cud get gaun my road, an' anither hooer seen me dannerin' up the road nixt hame, an' wunnerin' tae mysel' if the neibours wud ken me efter my trevels.

Jest as A apened the gate, A seen my ma sittin' milkin' the coo in the close. The coo wuz that gled tae see me that she gied her heid a flourish an' let a roar. Then my ma lukit roon tae see what wuz wrang, an' A can tell ye it wuznae lang till she had me in her arms, an' sez she—

" Paddy, dear, A'm gled tae see ye safe hame agen, an' yer no yin bit altered."

" Weel, ma, A hae seen a guid dale since A left ye," sez I, " an' it'll tak me a lang time tae tell ye it a'."

By that time we had got intil the hoose, an' the servint lass put on the kettle tae mak me a cup o' tay. A changed my claes, an' got on my slippers, an' whun A sut doon at the tay-table an' lukit at the bleezin' fire, the big dug waggin' his tail wi' joy, an' the smilin' face o' my ma, A laid mysel' back in my ermchair, an' sez I—
" Ma, there's nae place like hame."

HIS COURTSHIPS.

EH, but this coortin's a quer thing! It's a sinless infirmity o' the human race; a sort o' universal complaint; an' A need harly tell ye that A hae had a wee touch o' the disease mysel'. Iverybuddy in the earthly worl' talks about Love; yin tells ye it's like this thing, an' the tither tells ye it's like that thing. A declare tae ye but it's sumthin' like the maisles; ye cannae aye tell whun ye catched it, yer no apt tae hae it terble severe mair nor yince in yer life, an' it's no coonted muckle worth unless it streks inwardly! A hae richt guid min' searchin' thro' an auld dickshunery that belanged tae my puir da afore me, fur the meanin' o' the word " Love." It said that it wuz the " Tender Pashun;" a " Saftness;" a " Yearmin'!" A dinnae think it's very " tender," fur A ken sum fowk an' their love's as tough as the sole o' my auld shoe; but dear

knows it's "saft" eneuch, fur A ken ithers that fair melted awa' wi' it. "Yearnin'." A dinnae ken what that is. Mebbe it means a "langin'." an A can verra weel unnerstan' love tae be like a langin'. A knowed a man yince, an' aye whun he wud be drinkin' a gless o' whuskey he wud smack his lips an' say, "Man, A wush my throat wuz a mile lang, till A cud fin' the taste o' it the hale road doon!" Noo, that wuz jist like me whun A wuz coortin' Maggie. She leaved aboot a mile frae oor hoose, an' A used tae glower thro' the trees in the evenin's, an' wush my erms wur a mile lang, till A wud get shakin' han's wi' the wee darlin'!

My ma used tae sing a song, an' the ower word o' it wuz—

"Oh, love is like a dizziness, a dizziness, a dizziness,

It winna let a puir buddy gang aboot their business."

Oh, the sorra muckle bizness ye'll dae whun yer coortin'. There ye gang! sumtimes trailin' yin fut efter the tither, jist as if there wuz a big stane tied tae ivery yin o' them, an' at ither times rinnin' up agen iverybuddy ye meet. Sumtimes ye'll no eat very muckle, an' ither times ye'll forget tae stap whun yer fu'. Sumtimes ye'll sleep terble little at nicht, an' ither times ye'll forget tae gang tae bed ava. Oh, it's as true as yer stannin' there! A min' yin nicht that A went hame efther seein' Maggie, an' if A didnae pit my hat an' umbrella in bed, an' A stud ahint the daur till the mornin'!

A wuz nae waen at that time, mun' ye, but a big, stoot, strappin' fellow, sumthin' aboot thirty yeer auld. A had made up my min' no tae merry as lang as my ma wuz alive, but A begood tae think she wuz gaun tae leeve me oot fur it; so A tell't her A wuz gaun tae luk aboot me fur a wife. She said she wud get yin fur me, an' A wuznae tae merry unless A got plenty o' money wi' the lass. Weel, there wuz an odd sort o' crayter—A kin o' wud-be-lady—in oor cuntry side that wuz said to be gie an' wealthy. Her name wuz as odd as hersel'—they ca'd her Olivia Oglesby Norris. A declare but my ma tuk it intil her hoid that she wud mak up a match atween us. What was she set aboot it A'm shair A cannae tell; but at ony rate, yin day whun A wuz at my denner she sez tae me, sez she—

"Paddy, my boy, your breid's bakit."

"Is it?" sez I, "Wha bakit it? Wuz it, Betty?"

"Yer aye talkin' blethers," sez she; "A mean there's guid luk afore ye."

"Weel," sez I, "it haes kept afore me a guid while; dae ye think A'll catch it this time?"

"It's yer ain faut if ye dinnae," sez she.

"Weel, tell me about it," sez I.

"Wha dae ye think wuz here the day inquiren' about ye?" sez she.

"A'm shair A dinnae ken," sez I; "wha wuz it?"

"Miss Norris," sez she; "an' she haes invited ye tae drink tay wi' her nixt Thursday night."

"A'll no gang yin peg! No the length o' my fit!" sez I; an' A wuz that mad A neerly chokit on a hot pritta.

"Dinnae daur tae speak back tae yer mither that wae," sez she; "A hae said it, noo, an' gang ye wull, or A'll lock up yer new claes, an' ye'll niver pit them on yer back agen."

A wuz heart feerd o' my ma, fur she haes a terble bad tongue. A declare whun her temper's up she cud "clip cloots wi' it," as the sayin' is.

Tae change the discoorse. A sez to her—

"Weel, A suppoas A maun dae what ye bid me; but A wud rether walk tae Biffast on my heid than drink tay wi' that wuman!"

"Ay indeed ye'll gang," sez she, "an' mak yersel' plessant an' agreeable, an' A'll hae ye merried tae her afore a twal-month."

A tuk nae mair denner that day!

Whun Thursday night cum A declare A jist felt like a man that wuz gaun tae be hanged. A put on my new claes an' startit fur Miss Norris's. Whun A got up near the hoose whaur she leeves A sut doon on the dyke a while to think ower what A wud say tae her. "She'll begin a talkin' French tae me," sez I tae mysel'; "or she'll begin tae gie me lessons in 'eat-the-cat,' or whatever ye ca' it, fur she's a terble yin fur shewin' airs, an' cuttin' capers, an' teachin' monners tae iverybuddy roon her." Jist wi' that her wee servint boy cum along the road drivin' a big soo an' a litter o' wee pigs.

"That's a brave evenin'," sez he.

"It is," sez I; "wha owns them nice wee pigs?"

"That auld soo, their mither," sez he.

"Yer a richt smert wee boy," sez I. "What age micht ye be?"

"Weel, indeed," sez he, scratchin' his heid, "A'm no shair; but if ye tak that wee swutch o' a rod in yer han' an' hird the pigs fur me A'll rin hame an' ax my ma."

"Oh, ye neednae bother," sez I; "but tell me," sez I, "is this whaur Miss Norns leeves?"

"It is that, man," sez he; "ir you the fellow that's invited tae drink tay wi' her the nicht? She sent me intae the toon the day fur a stale loaf an' a wheen o' crackers tae fill up the far lan'. A hope ye tuk a guid fill afore ye left hame," sez he; an' A heerd him lauchin' till A got inside the hoose."

Miss Norris wuz very gled tae see me, an' tuk me doon the room whaur the tay wuz waitin'. Noo, it's bad menners tae pass remarks about ither folk's hooses, an' ye mauna let on what A'm tellin' ye. A niver felt as miserable in a' my life. Sich a tay drinkin' A niver did see a wuman that cud tak as mony slices oot o' a sixpenny loaf as Miss Norris. Why, ivery slice wuz aboot as thick as a sheet o' san' paper. An' the butter—och, the butter! She shud a been ashamed tae luk a coo strecht in the face! Ye wud a needed a pair o' specs tae tell what side the butter wuz on. A declare A wuz ashamed tae lift a piece aff the plate fur feer A wud mebee eat it with the wrang side up! An' then A wush ye had seen the cups! They wur aboot the size o' hen eggs, an' fur a' that she cudnae fin' in her heart tae fill them.

"Noo, Mr. M'Quinnan," sez she, "ye may jist begin."

Sez I tae mysel', "A wush A had din."

Weel, A stirred my tay, an' gruppit the hannel o' my cup tae coup the tay oot intae the sasser, whun Miss Norris gied a wee scraich that made me jump till A neerly spilt it ower the table.

"What's wrang, mem?" sez I.

"Dinnae pit yer tay in the sasser," sez she.

"An' what fur, mem?" sez I. "Dae ye think the heat wud split it?"

"Na, na," sez she, "but it's bad menners."

"Weel, A dinnae ken what they made sassers fur," sez I, pittin' the thing aff wi' a joke, ye ken. Then she begood tae lauch at me; an' tae mak' things waur, the tay wuz that hot that it neerly scalded the tongue oot o' my heid, an' whun A tried tae swallow it, it run doon the wrang throat. A made glam at my pokit fur my hankerchey, an' whun A did get it oot A let it drap. Weel, A wuz in sich pain that A had my een nearly shut, so A played snap at the fluir, an' gruppit what A thocht wuz my hankerchey, an' wipeit my face wi' it, then A wuz busy stickin' it intil my pokit, whun the chaney begood tae jump on the table, an' Miss Norris begood tae scraich. A declare but A had wipeit my face wi' the table-claith, an' wuz pittin' it intil my pokit!

A got my first cup finished at last, an' o' coorse there wuz a taste o' what we ca' "slaps" in the bottom. Weel, A jist did as A wud dae at hame, an' played fling wi' the slaps intil the fire! Och, if ye had seen Miss Norris then. She lauched that hearty she cudnae speek, but aye kept pointin' wi' her finger tae a white bowl on the table.

"Oh, niver mind," sez I, "A neednae dirty yer nice chaney bowl, mem."

"But," sez she, "that's what it's fur, an' it's no very convaynient tae throw it sae far."

"Hoot's wuman, deer," sez I, "A cud throw it ten times as far."

A got anither o' them half cups o' tay, an' wuz waitin' till she wud ask me fur a thurd. But she niver proposed it, an' there A had tae quat afore A wuz richt startit.

"An' whun wull ye cum back fur yer tay?" sez she.

"Deed, mem," sez I, "A'm no shair." Thinks I tae mysel', "A wush A wuz at hame, for A cud tak it this minnit again."

Then she cleared awa' the tay things, an' begood tae play on the pianer, an' she throwed her een up tae the ceilin' an' sung tae me till A fell that soond asleep that my ain snorin' waukened me.

It wuz a guid thing she didnae catch me sleepin', fur if she had A wud a got a lekter, A'm shair, aboot my bad manners. A wudnae a fell asleep if she had played a wheen o' the guid auld tunes, but noo-a-days folk wud rether hae this soart o' new fangled music that A can compare tae naethin' but noise. A cud make better music on a tin can.

So A got up an' went hame, determined in my ain min' that the nixt time A went tae coort it wudnae be tae Miss Norris's.

A didnae tell my ma that, though. A tell't her that Miss Norris wuz a fine woman, an' that her an' me wud get on bravely thegither. The auld buddy wuz sae plesed wi' me that fur a guid while efter that she buttered my breid on baith sides!

* * * * *

They say that ivery Jock haes his Jean, an' A met mine at last, only they ca'd her Maggie. A'll niver forget the furst time A saw Maggie. As true as A'm here but A wud leev my hale life ower again jist tae hae the plesure o' seein' that wee darlin' again fur the furst time. She cum on a visit tae Wully Rabertson's, o' the "Hill Heid," an' the nixt Sunday she cum tae the meetin'-hoose wi'

Sarah Ann Rabertson. A jist happened tae lift my een an' drap them on her as she cum in the daur, an' A declare my heart jumpit tae my mooth. "Wha in a' the wurl can that be?" thinks I tae mysel'. A didnae hear muckle o' the sermon that day. A hope it wuz nae sin, but indeed A cudnae keep my een aff her. She hadnae a big tapitoorie heid o' hair like the maist o' the lasses in them days, about the size o' a kist o' drawers. A dae not ken hoo they made them sae big, but A'm tell't it wud mak ye lauch tae see them dressin' their heids. A used tae watch my sister Susanna, an' A declare she tore a' the stuffin' oot o' the guid parlour chers, an' yin day I catched her makin' pads fur her heid oot o'n auld pair o' my korderoy breeks. But as A wuz sayin', there wuz nae capers wi' Maggie. Everything about her wuz plain an' nice.

Whun A wuz gaun hame that day Davey Duncan owerlook me on the road, an' sez he—

"Man, Paddy, A saw ye takin' quer luks at Maggie Patten the day."

"Me!" sez I, "A wuz listenin' tae the sermun."

"Wur ye?" sez he, "A'll bate ye a ha'penny ye cannae tell me the text."

"Deed," sez I, "my memory's no the best. But ~~w~~'s Maggie Patten?" sez I.

"She's a frien' o' the Rabertson's," sez he, "an' she leeves doon in Kilwuddy."

Sez I, "A think A did notis a strange lass at the meetin'."

"Ay, A think ye did," sez he; "but this is my road," sez he, "an' A suppoas ye'll be at the concert on Tuesday night at the schule-hoose?"

"A'm no shair that A wull," sez I.

"Ob, ye maun cum," sez he, "an' ye'll see Maggie there."

That wuz eneuch! Sez I tae mysel', "A'll gang tae the concert, an' hae anither luk at her."

Weel, Davey Duncan wuz coortin' Sarah Ann Rabertson, an' A had a purty strong noshin they wud a' be cumin' in thegither. It wuz jist as A thocht. A wuz at the schule-hoose gie an' early, an' whun A went in, there they wur, Davey, Sarah Ann, an' the strange lass. Davey waggit his finger at me, an' A went an' sut doon aside them.

"Here's a sweetheart fur ye, Maggie," sez Davey, an' the wee deer shuk han's wi' me. A thocht tae mysel' A wud niver wesh

my han's ony mair! Whun the singin' wuz nearly ower Davey whuspered tae me that Maggie wuz gaun hame tae her ain hoose that nicht, an' sez he "A'm gled yer here, Paddy; it'll save me the trouble o' gaun wi' her, fur A want tae hae a crack wi' Sarah Ann the nicht."

"Wull she no' object?" sez I.

"Nae fear o' that," sez he, "man, she wuz axin Sarah Ann wha the nice fellow wi' the Jenny Lin' hat wuz—meamin' you, Paddy."

Noo, A belev there's sich a thing as deein' wi' happiness, an' A wuz very near it then! It cum sae unexpected, ye see, an' there wuz like a lump got in my throat, an' very near chokit me.

Davey managed it nicely, an' we wur suin on the road fur Kilwuddy. Maggie had a big shawl over her arm, an' she made me rowl mysel' up in it, fur fear A wud catch cauld. It wuz a gie lang walk, an' whun we got tae the hoose Maggie invited me in.

A shud tell ye here that in oor cuntry side whun ye gang hame wi' a lass ye may sit an' crack at the fireside as lang as ye like, nae metter hoo late it is. We're no sae stuk-up in the cuntry as the boys ir in the toon, liftin' their hat tae their lass whun they meet her, an' mabbe her cleen oot o' sicht whun they dae that.

Weel, A niver wuz as much put aboot in my life as A wuz whun A went inside the hoose. Maggie tuk a chair an' sut doon at yin side o' the fire, an' A sut doon on a creepie stool at the tither. A tried tae speak, but A declare my tongue wuz tied. Maggie lukit at me, an' A lukit at Maggie; then A cleered my throat.

"Ye hae got a cauld," sez she.

"A hae that," sez I.

Then we sut a while langer. A pickit up a strae that wuz lyin' on the hearthstane, an' begood tae chow it.

"It's bad wather fur the prittaes," sez Maggie.

"It is that," sez I; "terble bad wather fur the craps in general."

"Wur ye in the fair on Seturday?" sez she.

Sez I, "A wuz."

"Hoo wuz the hay a sell.n'?" sez she.

Sez I, "It wuz twa or three prices, an' frae that doon."

There wuz anither lang quate spell, an' A tuk up the tanga an begood tae poke among the greesugh.

"Ye'll be hungry," sez Maggie.

"No yin bit," sez I; "A et neer a griddle fu' o' pritta breid tae my tay the nicht."

She went awa an' brocht me a bowl o' sweetmilk an' a big plate o' breid, an' a glass sasser fu' o' watter an' wee yellow things aboot the size o' merbles sweemin' in it.

"What dae ye ca' that?" sez I.

"Butter," sez she.

"Weel," sez I, "A niver saw butter dressed that wae afore. A suppoas," sez I, "ye sup it up wi' a spoon."

Puir Maggie lauched at me an' sez she, "Diz Miss Norris no dress her butter that wae?"

"Oh, haud yer tongue aboot her," sez I, "A ken naethin' aboot her."

"A thocht it wuz a match atween ye," sez she.

"Weel," sez I, "there was a tay drinkin' match atween us yince, but A think A'll no bother her again."

Weel, Maggie cleered aff the things, an' we drew oor stools up tae the fire again an' crackit awa like crickets, till aboot twa o'clock in the mornin'.

"Noo," sez Maggie, "it's time ye wur steppin' hame, fur A hae tae rise at six o'clock tae churn, an' A'll no be fit fur my wark if A dinnae get a sleep."

"Weel," sez I, "A suppoas A maun gang; but A think A'll hae a kiss. A dinnae ken muckle aboot coortin', but a'll kiss ye fur a start!"

"A'm shair ye'll dae naethin' o' the soart," sez she, an' wi' that she jumpit up an' made aff tae the tither side o' the hoose. A made efter her, but in my hurry a knockit doon the wee table that the cannell was sittin' on, an' there we wur in the derk. Weel, of coorse, Maggie kenned whaur she wuz; but me bein' a stranger, A hae tae gang creepin' aboot wi' my han's spread oot afore me, fur fear A wud brek my nose again sumthin'. A had naethin' tae guide me but the geeglin' o' Maggie, an' she did giggle wi' a vengeance. A katched her at last an' my shockin'! if she didnae kick an' squeal an' struggle A thocht she wud wauken up the hale hoose.

"Agh, Maggie wuman! Maggie wuman!" sez I, an' A bel' her ticht in my erms, an' kissed her half-a-dizen times. "Oh, Maggie, wuman, but that's guid. Wait till A pit them back whaur A got them."

Jist wi' that A heerd a match strickin'. Weel, as ye may imagine, A glowered with baith een, an' held on by Maggie a' the time. What dae ye think I saw? There was Maggie at the far side o' the hoose lichtin' the cannel, an' lauchin' as if she wud split. Of coorse my nixt luk wuz tae see wha A had been huggin' an' kissin'; an' wha wuz it but Maggie's ma, that had cum doon stairs tae get a drink. Weel, A gruppit my hat an' tuk oot, an' A didnae stap rinnin' till A wuz hame an' in bed.

Maggie niver let that drap on me, but we suin got tae be grate friens, an' A tell't her A cudnae leev without her. She lauched an' hung doon her heid, an', of coorse, A kenned the meanin' o' that.

Yin day whun A wanted tae ax her faither's consent, she sez tae me—

"Ye neednae bother, Paddy, for he'll refuse ye. He wants me tae merry Jack Slouthers, an' A hate him in my heart, fur he's a drunken niver-dae-weel."

So she tell't me tae let her work her faither her ain wae. Fur a guid while efter that A went back an' forrit tae her hoose, an' whun A cudnae get tae see her A wud stan' glowerin' through the trees nixt her side o' the cuntry, or A wud sit an' write letters an' sangs tae her. A wush ye had heerd them. A'm shair naebuddy wud think tae luk at me that A cud write poetry, but it's wonnerfu' the pooer that a bonnie lass haes ower a fella. A beleev it wuz a lass takin' thistles oot o' Rabbie Burn's thoom that startit him till makin' sangs, an' a suppoas Maggie's kindly han' had the same effect on me. A'm shair A wrote a hunner bits o' poetry, but A throwed the maist o' them intil the fire. A fun' yin o' the sangs the tither day in Maggie's band-box, an' A may as well let ye heer it:—

Oh, Maggie, darlin', my love, my starlin',
 My ain wee Maggie wi' the lauchin' een,
 Yer the sweetest crayter, wi' yer saft guid natur,
 That auld Kilwuddy haes iver seen,
 Och, my heart it's burnin', an' my heid it's turnin',
 A'm no worth leevin', nor fit tae dee;
 A'll kill yer daddy, or my name's no Paddy,
 If he'll no consent tae yer merryin' me,
 A feel a' quer noo, an' my very hair noo
 Wi' doonricht trouble is turnin' white;
 My mind's tormented—och, A'm half demented,
 An' A've lost my yince noble appetite.

An' noo A maunt tell ye hoo we got red o' Jack Slouthers. Maggie's faither wuz very fond o' Jack, but he did not like his drinkin' hebits. Weel, yin nicht there wuz a perty at Maggie's hoose; Jack wuz invited an' so wuz I. Whun Jack made his appearance we saw he wuz "gie an' far on," as the sayin' is; so Maggie's father tuk him ootside tae see if the fresh air wud sober him. He left him stanin' doon aside the pighouse, an' sez he, "Noo, Jack, stan' there fur aboot ten minits, an' A'll cum back fur ye." He hadnae lang left him when we heerd a dreadfu' squealin' amang the pigs, an' a wheen o' us run oot tae see what wuz wrang. Puir Jack had been leanin' ower the wa' an' had tumiled in amang the pigs. There he wuz, lyin' on the braid o' his back, the auld soo wuz lickin' his face an' gruntin', an' the young yins wur rinnin' amang his legs an' squealin' like mad. A suppoas Jack thocht he wuz amang a wheen o' his drunken compenions fur he wuz shoutin' as hard as he wuz able—

"Fair play, boys! fair play! Wait till A get aff my coat, fur A can lick the best man amang ye!"

A thocht Davey Duncan wud a went intae fits lauchin', an' sez he—

"Weel, Jack, by the time ye wud lick that auld soo a' ower ye wud be tired."

That spree finished Jack's coortin' there, an' left the road clear fur me. It wuznae lang till we got it a' settled, an' the day fixed fur the weddin'.

A begood tae think that it wuz time A had tell't my ma aboot it, fur the puir auld buddy thocht a' this time that A wuz coortin' Miss Norris. So yin mornin', jist as A wuz gaun oot eithar my brekfast, A sez tae her, sez I—

"A hae din that at last, ma."

"Din what?" quo' she.

"A hae axed her tae merry me," sez I.

"Weel?" sez she, an' pit on her specs an' glowered fair doon my throat.

"Oh, weel," sez I, "she'll tak me."

"Och, Paddy," sez she, "yer a darlin'! Noo A'm prood o' ye, an' the hale cuntry side wull envy ye; min' ye the like o' Miss Norris is no tae be catched ivery day."

"Ma, dear," sez I—an' A felt the tug o' war wuz cumin' noo—"Ma, dear," sez I, "A niver tried tae catch her."

"What dae ye mean, boy," sez she. "Didn't ye tell me this minit that she wud tak ye; ye didnae mean tae say that she did a' the coortin' hersel'!"

Sez I, "A niver coorted ony at her, an' it wuznae her A wuz talkin' about ava."

"An' wha then?" sez she.

Sez I, "A lass that deserves a far better man than me—Maggie Patten, o' Kilwuddy."

A declare A wuz scaured at the change that cum ower the auld buddy's face. As shair as ye're stanin' there but A cud see the hair turnin' far whiter on her heid—she tried tae speak twa or three times, but the words cudnae cum.

"Wud ye like a moothfoo' o' cauld watter?" sez I.

"A shud tak an' throw ye in the hoose hole," sez she, "ye un-mannerly houn' ye. Didn't A think ye wur coortin' Miss Norris a' this time."

"Agh, haud yer tongue," sez I. "What use wud that wuman be tae me unless A wud set her up tae scaur craws aff the pritties! Is it her," sez I, "the cross-lukin', lanky, flet-fitted crayter!"

"She's naethin' o' the soart," sez my ma.

"Isn't she," sez I, "why if she wud only luk into the crame crock it wud soor it; an' she's that thin that whun she turns sideways A cannae see her."

"Weel, she's no flet-fitted," sez my ma.

"Why," sez I, "her feet's as flet as flounders, an' whun she pits them doon—och, sudden daith tae a' creepin' things."

She sut doon on a wee stool, an' begood a rockin' hersel' back an' forrit.

"Noo," sez I, "ye neednae say anither word, for my mind's made up, an' if ye dinna let me tak Maggie A'll gang an' list."

She said nae mair, an' the nixt day she begood tae mak preparations for the weddin'.

HIS WEDDING.

WEEL, Maggie an' me were tae get merried in yin o' the big churches in Bilfast, fur we didnae want tae mak a fuss amang the neibours, so A went up in the train yin day tae see a frien' o' mine that had promised tae tell me hoo A wud get the leeshins.

The first place A had tae gang was tae an offis tae get oor names set doon. As A wuz gaun up the stairs A met a young fella cumin' doon wi' a pen stuk ahint his ear, an' sez I—

"Sir, wud ye be pleesed tae tell me is this the place whaur the fowk pits doon their names tae get merried?"

Sez he, "it is that, man; cum up stairs."

Weel, A went wi' him intil the offis, an' there wuz a hale lot o' fellows sittin' writin' an' a big man comes up tae me, an' sez he—

"What dae ye want?"

Sez I, "Sir, if ye please we're gaun tae be merried, an' A want the names set doon."

"Wha's gaun tae be merried?" sez he.

"Maggie an' me," sez I; "did ye no hear aboot it?"

"What's yer name?" sez he.

"Paddy M'Quillan," sez I.

"Whaur dae ye leeve?" sez he.

Sez I, "A leeve in Ballymacdermott, in the Coonty Doon."

"What bizness dae ye follow?" sez he.

"A'm a fermer?" sez I.

"What's the young wuman's name?" sez he.

Weel, dae ye know, A begood tae think the fellow wuz terble inquisitive, an' that seein' me tae be a cuntryman an' a bit saft-lukin', he wuz takin' a "rise" oot o' me, so A made up my mind that A wud gie him his anser if he axed me ony mair questions.

"What's the young wuman's name?" sez he again.

"Mister," sez I, "it's a name that nether her nor me's ashamed o'; they ca' her Maggie Patten."

"Yer a Presbyterian," sez he.

"Em A?" sez I.

"Ir ye not?" sez he.

" Oh," sez I, " you said A wuz, an' A suppoas you ken best."

A saw he wuz gettin' a wee bit rid in the face, an' gie an' angry-lookin', an sez he, " Cum, cum, sir! what's yer religion?"

Sez I, " It's the richt sort, that's what it is."

" An' what's that?" sez he.

" My mither's afore me," sez I.

" An' what diz she beleave in?" sez he.

" Man," sez I, " she haes great faith in a cup o' guid strong tay in the mornin'."

Weel, whun A said that, the young chaps in the offis roared clean oot, an' the fella himself wuz fair mad.

Sez he, " A suppoas ye think yersel' a gie cliver boy, but A'll fin' ye oot; what place o' wurship dae ye gang tae?" sez he.

" No that yin at the corner," sez I, " but the tither yin doon aside Menyarry's coal-yerd."

" Nane o' yer humbuggin'," sez he; " if ye wur seek an' like tae dee, wha wud ye send fur?"

" Fur the doktor, of coorse," sez I.

" Cum, cum," sez he, " gang oot o' this, or tell me yer religion; ir ye a Presbyterian?"

" Tae be shair A em," sez I.

" An' why cudn't ye tell me that at yince."

Sez I, " Ye never axed me."

" Yis, A did," sez he.

" Na, ye did not," sez I, " ye said A wuz this thing an' the tither, but ye niver axed me what A wuz."

A had been readin' a book the cal' " Handy Andy," or else A wudnae a been half sae able fur this imperent fella.

Weel, he wrote sumthin' doon in a book an' then sez he " That'll dae; cum back in aboot a week an' ye'll get yer leeshins."

" Very weel," sez I, " guid mornin' tae ye."

" Wait a minit," sez he, " gie me a shillin'."

" What fur?" sez I.

" Fur pittin' doon yer names," sez he.

" Man," sez I, " but ye tak me tae be a terble gassoon; dae ye think A'm no able tae write doon my ain name?"

" Oh, A suppoas ye can," sez he.

" Na, there's nae supposin' aboot it," sez I; " an A micht as weel a wrote them an' saved a shillin'. It wud a pyed my train hame."

A gied him the shillin', but as A went doon the stairs A said tae mysel—

"My boy, A hope it'll no be you that'll serve me whun A cum back fur the leeshins, fur Maggie wull be wi' me then, an' if ye cut ony o' yer capers, there'll be a row as shair as A'm leevin'."

Weel, Maggie, the crayter, went up tae Biffast tae spen' a week wi' sum o' her friens, an' tae get her weddin' things reddy; an' yin day A went up, an' her an' me went oot tae get what wuz needed.

"What'll we buy first, Maggie?" sez I.

"A suppoas the ring," sez she.

"Very weel," sez I, "A wuz lukin' in a nice shap wundey jist twa or three daurs up High Street, an' A saw a wheen o' gie nice yins there. Cum awa till we see them."

Whun we went intil the shap there wuz a nice pleesint lukin' man behin' the coonter, an' sez I, "Sir, A want tae luk at some o' yer rings; we're gaun tae be merried, an' A want a ring that'll fit this young lass."

"Very weel," sez he, "an' A suppoas ye'll want a 'keeper'?"

"A'll want what?" sez I.

"A keeper," sez he.

"Na," sez I, "A jist want a ring; A'll try an' keep her mysel'."

He lauched, an' sez he—

"Weel, hoo mony karats wud ye like?"

"Hoo mony what?" sez I.

"Hoo many karats?" sez he.

"Noo, what in a' the airthly wurl dae A want carrots fur at this time o' the year?" sez I; "an shair ye didnae sell carrots?"

A declare A thocht he wud a split himsel' lauchin' at me; an' as suin as he wuz able tae speak he tell't me that 'karat' wuz the name that shewed the quality o' the goold.

"Weel," sez I, "A'll niver pit a ring on Maggie's finger that'll affront her, so," sez I, "ye had better gie me yin at a hunner karats."

He niver lauched hearty till then, an' A saw a nice lady that wuz aside him pooin' his coat tail tae quat lauchin' at me.

"A beg yer pardon," sez he, "but A cannae help it. There's nae sich thing as a hunner karat."

"Oh, weel," sez I, "gie me the best ye hae," an' he did gie me yin that he said wuz jest newly made.

Whun we went oot o' that, sez I tae Maggie, sez I, "ye cannae dae athoot a nice parasole."

" Oh, A can dae athoot it richtly," sez she.

" Na wuman, ye can not, indeed. A'll hae ye that gran' when we gang intil the meetin'-hoose on Sunday the fowk wull dae naethin' but luk at ye."

Maggie lauched an' made nae mair objectshin.

A tuk her doon tae a shap jist appasite the en' o' Bridge Street. We stud lakin' in the wundey iver sae lang an' Maggie, the crayter, wuz taen on ower ocht wi' thon thing in the wundey stuck fu' o' umbrellas an' birlin' roon an' roon. She cud a watched it a' day. Whun we went in an' A tell't the man what A wanted he got a nice young lady till attend tae Maggie, an' he stud an' crackit wi' me. A axed him hoo he got the umbrella aboon the daur an' the things in the wundey tae birl roon, an' he tuk me ahint the coonter an' showed me the pulleys and rapes that wurked them. He explained tae me at the same time a' aboot the Eleck Trick licht that he haes in his shap.

Maggie got a darlin' parasole, an' she haes it till this day maist as guid as new. A seen the man oot o' the shap no lang ago, an' he said whun it got shabby, he wud cover it wi' new silk fur Maggie, an no' cherge her much fur it.

The nixt place we went wuz doon tae Donegall Street, fur the furniter o' the hoose an real darlin' things A got. They're the talk o' the hale cuntry side. Whun ye sit doon on the sofa or chers ye gang awa doon that far, an' ye get sae cumfutable that ye jist wush ye niver had tae rise agin.

Sez I, " Maggie, deer, it's neer twa o'clock, an' we maun gaun doon noo an' get the leeshins."

When A went doon tae the offis fur the leeshins, wha shud cum up tae me but the very chap that anger'd me the last day A wuz there.

" What dae ye want?" sez he.

" A want the leeshins," sez I.

Then he went awa intae anither room. Sez I tae mysel', " My boy, A hope it'll no be you that'll serve me the day, fur Maggie's wi' me, an' if ye cut ony o' yer capers, or ax ony imperent questyins, it'll no be tellin' ye."

Back he cum wi' a wee book in his han' tied roon an' roon wi' a piece o' string.

" Tak' that in yer han'." sez he.

" What's that?" sez I.

"It's a Testament," sez he.

Sez I, "My frien', a doot ye dinnae read yer Testament affen if ye aye keep it tied up that wae."

"Young wuman," sez he, "tak haud o' the book tae."

Sez I, "Sir, if ye please, her name's Miss Patten. Although we're country fowk," sez I, "ye micht be a wee bit ceevil whun yer speakin' tae us. Noo, A wudnae min' yer ca'in me 'young man,' but A wull not stan' here an' let ye ca' Maggie oot o' her richt name."

That appeared to stagger him a bit, an' then he begood tae gabble ower sumthin' as fast as iver he cud. Whun he had din, sez I—

"If ye please, sur, wull ye say that ower again?"

Weel, he said it ower again, but A wuznae a bit wisser than afore.

"What's that yer sayin' onywae?" sez I.

Sez he, "A'm sweerin' ye."

"Oh, deer!" sez I, "A suppose that's the wae ye sweer cuntry fowk."

"It's the wae A sweer iverybuddy," sez he.

"An'," sez I, "what dae ye want tae swear us fur? Dae ye think A'll no tell ye the truth? Shair we hae naethin' tae hide frae ye!"

"Kiss the book, sir!" sez he.

"Tak yer time a bit," sez I, "an' dinnae be in sich a hurry. Is Miss Patten tae kiss the book likewise?" sez I.

"Tae be shair she is," sez he.

"An'," sez I, "ye unmannnerly houn' ye, cud ye no ax her tae kiss it furst? Kiss the book, Maggie deer," sez I.

Then A kissed it efter her.

"Are you Patrick M'Quillan?" sez he.

"Yis," sez I, "A'm Patrick M'Quillan, an' A tell't ye that afore."

"Hav ye a wife alive?" sez he.

"Hav A what?" sez I.

"Hav ye a wife alive?" sez he.

"Weel, no' tae the best o' my knowledge," sez I. "Haes ony-buddy been talkin' tae ye aboot me," sez I, "that ye ax me sae mony questyins?"

"Oh, niver mind," sez he, "but jist anser me."

Then he turned roon tae Maggie, an' puir wee thing, ye cud a lichtit a cannel at her face.

" Wur you iver merried afore ?" sez he.

Mebbe that didnae tak the breath frae me !

" Stap, noo," sez I, " ye hae jist went far eneuch wi' yer fun. Sich a questyin," sez I, " wuz she iver merried afore ? What's yer een guld fur," sez I ; " diz she luk as if she had been merried afore, ye great big donkey ye !"

" Cum, cum," sez he, " A insist upon an anser."

Sez I, " A'll gie ye a whustle across the ear, ye imperent kerekther ye ! She niver wuz merried afore, an'," sez I, " if she wuz, what's that tae you ?"

Maggie pookit my coat tail, tae haud my tongue, an', sez she, " Indeed, sur, I wuz niver merried in my life."

" Noo," sez he, " haes this morriage the consent o' yer perents ?"

" It's nane o' yer bizness," sez I, " whuther it haes or no'. Gie me the leeshuns," sez I, " an' let me awa oot o' this ; if A had kent there wud a been sae muckle bother, A wud a got merried at hame."

Sae efter a while's mair talk he handed me a paper, an' awa we went.

Whun A left that, A taen Maggie up tae North Street tae buy her a pair o' weddin' shoon. A declare A cudnae mak up my min' what tae tak. The man that tuk the mizher o' Maggie's fit showed us that mony soarts that we were baith cleen bewuldered. At last A tuk a pair wi' darlin' goold buckles, glitterin' ower ocht. Ye niver seen the like o' them A'm shair, an' it's ower ocht the fowk that haes cum jist tae get a luk at them.

The boss an' me had a lang crack thegither, an' a trystit a pair o' strong shoon fur mysel', tae weer aboot the ferm. Thon's the nicest shoe shap that iver A wuz in, an' A'm tell't the man what owns it haes shaps in ither perts o' Bilfast. A tell't him that we wur gaun tae be merried, an' he wushed us baith ivery happiness, an' said that the furst time he wuz doon in our cuntry side he wud call an' see us.

" Hae ye iver been in Bellycuddy, Mester ?" sez I.

" A hae not," sez he, " but it's a place that A'm thinkin' grate lang tae see. A ken auld Rabin Gordon," sez he, " an' mony's the time A hae promised tae gang doon an' spend a day wi' him an' Peggy."

" Heth, an' ye shuld gang," sez I, " fur there's no kinder fowk in the cuntry, an' ye'll be rale weel treeted."

" A'm shair o' that," sez he.

By that time we wur gie an' hungerry, so we went an' had a nice denner, efter which we startit fur hame.

Then cum the weddin' day, an' ochone ! but that's the tryin' time ! As we went up the church A cud hear my heart batin' ower ocht, A wuz that nervish. There wuz a wheen o' freens wi' us, an' we wur a' ranged up afore the meenister. He stud up wi' a book in his han, an' gied us a lang leckter, but A declare A forget a' that he said except a wheen o' questyins he axed me, an' my heid wuz a' sweemin' roon an' roon wi' the distress A wuz in, an' A wuz haudin' on by the railins tae study mysel' when the meenister lukit intae my face, an' sez he,

" Dae ye tak this wuman tae be yer wedded wife ?"

" What's that, sur ?" sez I.

" Dae ye tak this wuman tae be yer wedded wife ?"

" Man, A dae that," sez I.

Then he lukit at Maggie, an' sez he,

" Wull ye tak this man tae be yer wedded husband ?"

Sez I, " Tae be shair she wull."

A wush ye had seen the luk he gied me. Then he axed her the questyin again, an' Maggie hung doon her heid, an' said, " Yes, sir," Then he made me say a hale lot o' things efther him, promisin' that A wud niver run awa' frae my wife ; that A wud niver coort ony mair sae lang as my wife wuz alive, an' A cudnae tell ye what a'.

Maggie got through her pert bravely till he tell't her tae say she wud obey me. Weel, ye ken, mony a time she had said she wud niver promise tae dae that, an' A suppoas that had cum intae her heid at the minit for, sez she, talkin' after the meenister, ye ken—" A promise tae love—honour—an' ob—ob—ob," but no yin bit o' her cud say " obey." A declare it set the very meenister a lauchin'.

A wuz the prood man whun A got hame wi' Maggie fur my wife. If ocht shud happen in the hoose A'll be shair tae let ye hear aboot it.

HIS WEE PADDY.

WAENS dear, hoo time birls roon ! It luks jist like yisterday since A wuz a young fellow coortin' an' here A em noo a merried man wi' a nice wee boy that ca's me " Da." A promised a while back tae let ye hear if ocht shud happen in oor hoose, an' my word sumthin' haes happened indeed !

Ye tauk aboot yer waens noo, but A wush ye seen my wee Paddy ! There's no yin in the hale cuntry side cud haud a cannell tae him. Och, if ye seen him jumpin', an' heerd the " boos " o' him whun A gang in fur my denner. Ye wud think he wud flee oot o' his ma's ernaes tae get till me.

But the cares o' the wurl ir cumin' on me fast. It's a' vera weel tae hae a wheen o' waens roon yer fireside, but the bother ye hae wi' them's sumthin' dreedfu'. A used tae be that whun A had din wi' my wark in the evenin' A cud a tuk a race oot tae see sum o' the neibors, but it's no that wae noo. Maggie maks me sit an' rock the creddle frae day'l-agaun till bedtime. Then wee Paddy's gettin' his teeth noo, an' A niver get a nicht's sleep like what A used tae dae. A dinnae like tae be makin' complaints aboot my ain waen, but min' ye it's nae joke tae be waukened up in the middle o' the nicht wi' the screeches o' him, an' tae hear Maggie sayin'—

" Paddy ! A'm sayin' Paddy ! Dae ye hear me, boy ? "

An' then A'll say—snorin' awa at the same time as hard as A'm able—

" Eh ? What's wrang, dochter ? "

" Dae ye no' hear the waen roarin' ? " she'll say : " A hae carried him here through the flair till A'm nearly frozen. Get up an' tak him awhile, fur it's your turn noo. "

An' there A hae tae crawl oot o' the warm blankets an' begin tae dannel the waen. A'm the wurst nurser in the wurl, fur A cannae talk tae a waen ava. The only thing A can say tae him is—

" There noo, there noo, that'll dae noo ; stap yer roarin' like a wee man, an' da'll gie ye shugar in the mornin' ! "

Sorra a bit o' him heeds me, but there he yells till he's black in the face.

Maggie cannae stan' that, an' so she'll say,

"Here, Paddy, gie me the waen here; yer nae menner o' use tae him."

"Oh, deed, A'll gie him tae ye an' welkim," A'll say, "fur he's a cross carnapshus wee brat, so he is!"

"He's naethin' o' the sort, Paddy!" she'll say, an' then A wush ye heerd the flooster she maks aboot him, an' she can talk tae him as nayterally as if she had nursed half-a-dizen. She'll cuddle him up in her arms, an' she'll say,

"Och, hims wuz a dear, so hims wuz. An' did hims no like hims da tae nurse him? A'll pye da! Wheest, my wee birdie, fur hims wi' his ain mammans; och, luvin's on him fur a wee mannins; an' wuz hims vera bad? Wuz him's wee tootles sore? Och, luk at him's wee eysey-pysie! An' him's wee noseey-posey! An' hims wee mousey-pousey!"

She can gang on that way fur mair than an hooer.

But that's no' the warst o' my troubles, fur my heart's at my mooth a hunner times a day fur fear sumthin' happens that waen. Bliss me! whun he begins tae trevil he'll mebee fa' intil the well an' be drooned. A'm gaun tae hae it filled up an' a pump made; or he'll tumble doon the stairs an' brek his wee neck; or he'll pit the stroup o' the taypot in his mooth an' scald his wee throat tae daith; or he'll choke himsel' on a piece o' a half-boiled pritta; or mebbe he'll stick his wee han' intil the boilin' parritch, an' hae tae get it cut aff! Noo dinnae let on that A tell't ye, but as true as ye're there A sumtimes work up my feelin's tae sich a pitch that A sit doon abint the dyke an' roar my bellyfu'.

Sez I tae Maggie yin day, sez I—

"What'll we ca' the waen, Maggie?"

Sez Maggie, sez she, "Jist ca' him 'Paddy,' it's the nicest name A know."

Sez I, "Dear he cudnae be named efter a better man nor his da, an' so we'll jist ca' him 'Paddy,' an'." sez I, "Maggie, we'll name the nixt yin efther you."

Maggie lauched at that.

"An' noo, Maggie," sez I, "A hae been thinkin' o' hae'in a big day o' it whun the waen's a chris'nin', an' A'm gaun tae ax a wheen o' lowk that A ken tae the perty."

Weel A got a sheet o' paper an' sut doon an' wrote oot the names o' the fowk A wuz gaun tae ax.

Whun a' things had been fixed, an' the day settled, A went doon tae Tam Jamison's, an' bocht a big lump o' beef wi' aboot thirty pun in it. A wuz seered it micht be a weethin' tough, so A hemmered it wi' the beetle an' rubbed saut intil it till A had it as tender as a chicken."

"Noo, Maggie," sez I, "if ye boil the fu' o' the twa-bushel pot o' them guid skerries, A think that them an' the lump o' beef ocht tae fill up the far-lan at ony rate, fur min' A'm tellin' ye sum o' them boys that's cumin' can tak their denner gie an' hearty. Wait till ye see Billy Skelly an' Jamey Menyarry walkin' intil the beef. A can tell ye the price o' beef wud cum doon gie an' quick if them twa wud turn vegetariens."

"Paddy, dear," sez she, "A'll hae a terble dale tae dae; A wush ye hadnae axed sae mony fowk; A dinnae ken hoo A'll attend tae them."

"Niver bother yer heid," sez I, "A'll get ye plenty o' help; Johnny Fisher wull carry in peats an' keep up the fire for ye, an' John Neevin wull watch the beef roastin'. If ye gie auld Rabin Gordon a big chair at the hearthstane he'll superintend things generally fur me. Then Mistress Johnston wull nurse the waen fur ye, an' Jennie Broon an' Susanna Todd wull help ye to lay the table an' attend tae the fowk, an' noo, dochter," sez I, "A'll awa an' gie the knives an' forks a rub fur ye."

A can tell ye A had a jab that warmed me at them knives an' forks. Mebee they wur steel yince in their time, but they wur like iron noo. They had been in the twa families for generations. Some o' the forks had three prangs, some o' them twa, an' ithers o' them only yin. Some o' the knives had black hannels, some white hannels, an' some had lost the hannels ategither.

While A wuz workin' at these, Maggie wuz huntin' up her crockery, an' it wuz little better nor my knives an' forks. There wusnae twa plates the same colour; some wur white, ithers blue, an' ithers agen wur black wi' age an' the smoke o' the lum. Puir Maggie stud lukin' at them wi' a face as lang as a Lurgan spade.

"What ails ye, dochter?" sez I, "shair they'll dae richtly. The fowk kens yer no lang ta'en up hoose an' that'll be an excuse fur ye."

" Oh, A'll be able tae get through wi' the denner," sez she, " but it's the epple dumplin' A'm bothered aboot; A hae nae plates for it."

" Cock them up wi' second plates!" sez I; " pit the dumplin' on the yins they get their denner on."

" Noo, Paddy dear, hae ye nae sense?" sez she; " hoo in the wurl cud A pit dumplin's on the plates the fowk et their denners aff, an' them a' covered wi' saut an' cauld gravy!"

" A didnae think aboot that," sez I; " but A'll tell ye what ye cud dae—turn the tither side o' the plates up."

Noo A jist tell ye this as a spaycimen o' the bother we had gettin' up that perty. A wush ye had heerd Meggie drillin' me aboot hoo A wuz tae conduct mysel'. A'm a wee bit free an' easy in my menners ye ken, an' Maggie wuz nearly as bad as Miss Norris on me."

" Noo, Paddy," sez she, " try if ye can be a weethin' dacent afore the strange fowk, an' dinnae tak' a bite till ye see ivery ither yin served."

" A cudnae stan' tae see them a' eatin' an' me gettin' naethin' mysel'," sez I, " an' if that's the wae it's tae be, A'll hae tae get sumthin' tae pit the hunger aff me afore they cum in."

" Na, no' yin bit," sez she.

" Ah, noo, Maggie, ye wudnae a treated me that wae whun we wur coortin': ye wud aye hae served me furst."

Then she wud lauch. But the wee clip she's able fur me, an' sez she,

" But, Paddy, yer the same as mysel' noo, whun we're man an' wife."

" Weel, weel, wuman, let it be onywae ye like."

" An' watch yer menners at the table," sez she; " dinnae let me see ye dippin' yer pritta in the sautcellar; an' whun ye tak a drink o' buttermilk, try if ye can use yer hankerchey, an' no be drawin' yer coat sleeve across yer mooth."

THE CHRIS'NIN'.

THE day cum at last, an' a' the fowk wi' it, an' my! but they wur the kindest fowk iver A seen. Ivery yin o' them brocht praisents for the waen, or Maggie, or me. Eftther a guid while's floosterin' an' bletherin', we a' got set doon tae oor denner, an' it wud a din yer heart guid tae a seen them fowk eatin'. Dinnae let on that A tell't ye, but without ony jokin', some o' yon boys' stumaks maun be made o' indianrubber. Mosey Martin had got in aside Susanna Todd; but A cud tell ye that if it's true, as the fowk sez, that they're saft aboot yin anither, it hasnae tuk awa' their appetites. A set doon a hale plate o' prittas atween them, an' in less nor five minits there wuz naethin' but skins. A dae not ken what they din wi' them! Big John Neevin cudnae eat a bit for lauchin'. But A cud harly keep Johnny Fisher gaun. A sliced aff the beef till A wuz clean tired, an' then auld Rabin Gordon releevd me.

"Mistress Gordon," sez I, "wud ye be sae kin' as tae gang up tae the kitchen an' bring doon the fu' o' yer apron o' them prittaes?"

"Deed, Paddy," sez she, "they're a' din."

"Weel," sez I, "mebee some o' ye wud like a piece o' ha:d breid, but dinnae forget tae leev room for the epple dumplins."

"A'm gled ye spauk in time," sez Jamey Menyarry; an' A seen him takin' a cupple o' buttons oot o' his weskit.

John Neevin lukit intil his face an' lauched, an' sez he, makin' fun, ye ken—

"Yer no din a'ready, Jamey!"

"Oh, ay," sez Jamey, "A maunt quat, an' A'm sorry at it, for that's the nicest bit o' beef iver A et."

"Did ye pokit ony Jamey?" sez Mosey Martin.

This wuz the wae we got on, lauchin' an' jokin' till the dumplins cum in, an' nae suiner wur they set on the table than some o' them struck up a sang that A heerd them singin' at a suree, aboot "Dumplin' Joe."

Jist as we had finished, in cum Peggy Gordon, an' sez she, "Haud yer tongues, waens, for A see the meenister comin'."

We had barely time tae get oor faces strecht afore his reverence steppit in.

"If ye had cummed a wee bit suiner, sir," sez I, "ye wud a been in time for yer denner."

"Oh, it's nae metter," sez he; "an' ye micht bring in the waen as suin as possible, for A'm in a hurry, as A'm gaun up tae Bilfast the nicht," sez he.

Mistress Neevin carried in the waen, a' dressed in white, an' Jeanie Broon brocht in a big bowl o' watter.

"Noo, sir," sez I; "ye'll no' hurt him A hope."

"Na, what wud A hurt him for?" sez he.

Mistress Neevin put the baby intil my erms, an' Maggie whuspered till me—

"Gie him a wee dannel, Paddy, if he offers tae roar."

Then the meenister sprinkled a taste o' the watter on his face, an' gied him his name. Ye talk aboot cauld water revivin' fowk, but mebee that didnae revive wee Paddy. He begood tae sraich maist dreedfully, an' sez Rabin Gordon, sez he—

"There maun be a pin jaggin' him, A think."

Sez Jamey Melville, sez he, "They shud a tuk the deid cauld aff the watter."

Weel A got intil a sort o' nervishness, an' A cleen forgot whaur A wuz, and wha wuz there, an' A begood tae cuddle up the waen, an' tae talk tae him the wae that A dae in the mornin's, an' sez I—

"There noo, there noo, that'll dae noo; stap yer roarin' like a wee man, an' da'll gie ye shugar in the mornin'."

The fowk begood tae titter an' lauch a' roon the hoose, an' Maggie tuk him oot o' my erms an' had him lauchin' in twa or three minits. A dae wush A cud talk tae him like her. Sez she—

"What did they dae on my wee sonnkins—on my wee mannkins—on my ain wee Paddykins. Ah, hims wuz hims ain ma's wee pet, so hims wuz," an' the wee buffer lukit up in her face an' lauched like onything.

Before the meenister went awa he gied us a bit o' advice in regerd tae the reerin' up o' the waen an' ither metters, an' as suin as he wuz weel oot o' the daur, the tay wuz brocht in an' the fun begood as brisk as iver.

A din my very best tae mak' the fowk feel at hame. "Cum, Mister Fisher," sez I, "pit sorrit yer han' an' tak breid; ye neednae be feered o' it; Mistress Gordon, is it possible yer eatin' yer breid

dry ; pit butter on it wuman ; cum, Mistress Neevin, pit the waen aff yer knee, fur yer gettin' nae guid o' yer tay. Sen' in yer cup, Mister Fisher ; A wuz wantin' Maggie tae gie you a bowl, but she said that ye michtnae ken the odds atween it an' a cup, an' mebee dae yersel' herm."

" Agh, Paddy," sez he, " dinnae be ower hard on me."

The tay wuz ower at last, an' then we had a wheen sangs ; an' eifter that John Neevin recited a nice piece o' poatry that he made himsel'.

Then they begood tae mak' speeches, an' my ! if ye had heerd the nice things they said. A wush the " Spectator " man had been there tae a tuk it doon in his book, an' A wud a got them prented. Mister Fisher wuz the furst that spauk, an' he said that he hopit wee Paddy wud be an honor an' a credit till his ma an' da, an' mak the name o' M'Quillan yin that wud niver be forgotten.

Auld Rabin Gordon spauk tae. He tell't us about iver sae mony waens that had been born in humble serkumstances, an' that had risen up tae be grate men. He said it wuz hard tae tell what wuz in store for wee Paddy M'Quillan, an' that he micht yit be the Lord Livtenant o' Ireland, or mebee Preem Meenister o' Inglan.

My, if ye had seen Maggie whun he said that ! The tears cummed intil her een, an' she cuddled up the waen till A did think she wad smuther him.

Weel eifter a wheen mair o' them had spauken they cried on me tae mak a speech.

" Noo, boys," sez I, " that's a thing A cud not dae, an' ye ken that richtly " ; but they kept hemmerin' the table wi' their neeves, an' shoutin' at me till a fair thocht shame, an' so A had tae get up till my feet.

" Weel, my friens," sez I, " A'm for iver obleeged tae ye, an' A'm shair so is Maggie, for a' yer kindness an' guid wushes for oor wee waen. He's in Guid's han's tae take him frae us or tae leev him wi' us, an' if he's spared we'll baith dae a' we can tae mak him an honest man, for it's better tae be a puir honest man than tae grow rich by roguery. Wi' these few remarks A beg tae sit doon."

The fowk cheered like onything whun A sut doon, an' then they cried on Jeanie Broon tae sing a sang that had been writ for the occasion.

This wuz the sang :—

Long life tae brave Paddy M'Quillan, an' Maggie, his bonnie wee
wife,

May they leev here thegither contented an' blythe a' the days o'
their life :

An' may blissins attend their wee Paddy we've helpit tae chrisen
the day,

May he be a guid boy, an' niver annoy, but his da an' his ma
aye obey.

Shair Paddy's a kin' hearted fellow, ye min' hoo he made us a'
laff,

Whun he tell't hoo he coorted Miss Norris that leaved doon in
Ballymeglaff ;

An' hoo he cud niver be gruppit, tho' Cupid throwed mony a
dart,

Till he met wi' his wee Maggie Patten, an' she run awa wi' his
heart.

An' noo that they're wedded thegither, may they niver know
sorrow nor care ;

May the sun iver shine on their dwellin', may they aye hae eneuch
an' tae spare ;

May we niver forget this gran' chris'nin, the tay, an' the toast,
an' the feast,

An' may Paddy and Maggie invite us to a dizen mair chris'nin's
at least.

HIS TWINS.

ATWEEN twa an' three year efter the chris'nin ceremony o' Paddy M'Quillan's waen, A had been oot yin day aboot the byre daein' sumthin' or ither, an wuz jist steppin' acroas the close tae the barn for a pickle stray fur a bed fur the moiley coo whun Peggy cummed till the kitchen daur lauchin' ower ocht, an' cryin' at me—

" Rabin, cum here till A tell ye this."

" What is it, dochter?" sez I, dannerin' up till the daur.

" Shair Paddy M'Quillan's wife haes twuns!" sez she.

" Haud yer tongue!" sez I, " yer shairly jokin'."

" It's as true as yer stannin' there, Rabin," sez auld Betty Gunyin, that wuz sittin' at the fire, warmin' hersel'.

" Oh, is that you Betty?" sez I.

" It is that, Rabin," sez she; " dae ye fin' yersel' gettin' ocht stronger?"

" Oh, weel, A dae, Betty," sez I, " An' what news is this ye hae brocht?"

" Bliss yer heart, Rabin, the hale cuntry kens it by this time," sez she, " an' Paddy's amaist wild. The fowk says he'll pit han' on himsel'."

" Hoots, blethers," sez I, " he shud hae mair sense nor that, Betty."

" Rabin, ye shud gang ower an' speek tae him," sez Peggy.

" Ay, deer bliss ye, dae," sez Betty, " fur it's as true as A'm tellin' it till ye that he nether tae haud nor tae bin' aboot it."

" Here, Peggy," sez I, " get me my coat an' my stick, an' A'll jist gang the noo."

Paddy leevs in the nixt toonlan', an' A wuznae lang till A wuz at the hoose. Whun A liftit the latch an' went in, there wuz nae-buddy in the kitchen bit the auldest waen, wee Paddy. He wuz sittin' stridelegs on the beesum shank, an' trailin' it throo the floor for a horse.

" Whaur's yer da, dear?" sez I.

" Da's in a barn, A sink," sez he.

As A turned roon till gang oot tae the barn, A heerd the waen tryin' till say sumthin' or ither, so A lukit back intil the kitchen. Puir wee man, he's terble fand o' me! He wuz in the biggest splutter that iver ye seen tryin' till get aff his horse, bit the shank o' the beesum had got gruppit in his wee pettycoats sumboo, an' he cudnae get cleer o' it. A went in an' helpit him aff, an' gied him a kiss. He lukit up in my face a' oot o' breth, an' sez he—

"Oh, Misser Dorden, wait till A tell ee iss."

"What is it, sonny?" sez I.

"Ma haes dot twa nice wee babbys," sez he.

"Luvins on ye, dear!" sez I.

"Ay, deed an' deed," sez he. "Tum doon a hoose an' see em."

A suppoas the fowk heerd my voice, fur a strange wuman cummed up the hoose an' axed me till tak a sate.

"Thank ye, A'll no' be sittin' the noo," sez I; "if ye ken whaur the guid man is, A wuz wantin' till hae a crack wi' him."

A hadnae richt said the words till Paddy cummed steppin' in. His face wuz as lang as a Lorgan spade, an' his een startin' oot o' his heid. A declare my heart jumpit till my mooth, fur A did think there wuz sumthin' dreedfu' wrang.

He gruppit me by the han' an' sez he—

"Oh, Rabin, isn't this ower ocht that haes happened till me?"

"What is it ava, Paddy?" sez I.

"Twa at yince, Rabin," sez he; "wha wud a thocht it? Twuns!" an' he sut doon, an' A thocht he wuz gaun tae roar.

"Man ye micht be very prood," sez I.

"Ay, A think that," sez the strange wuman; "jist wait till ye see them. They're a pair o' the purtiest wee crayters that iver ye clappit yer een on."

"Bring them up here till A luk at them," sez I.

Paddy got up till gang oot, bit A made him sit still whaur he wuz, an' sez I—

"Paddy, A dinnae unnerstan' ye, sittin' there as if ye wur dumfooned; ir ye no kontent?"

"Na, indeed A em not," sez he.

"Weel, an' did ye want anither yin?" sez I.

He lukit at me as angerry as ocht.

"Dinnae be huft wi' me, Paddy," sez I, "A thocht mebbe ye wur wantin' the Queen's boonty."

"What in the wurl em A tae dae wi' them?" sez he. "Luk at the hervest cumin' on, an' the like o' this happenin' till us."

"Hoots, blethers, an' nonsense!" sez I, "twunna is thocht naethin' aboot noo-a-days."

"A dae not ken what we'll dae wi' them," sez he, wringin' his han's, "twa helpless waens, an' wee Paddy no mair nor trevillen yit! If they cud rin aboot an' divert themsel's it wudnae metter sae muckle."

Jist wi' that Mistress Neevin cummed oot o' the room wi' yin wee bunnel in her arms, an' the strange wuman wi' anither yin.

"Weel, Rabin," sez Mistress Neevin, "it wuznae lang till you cum tae pye yer respeks tae the wee strangers. Luk at that fellow," sez she, sittin' doon in frunt o' me, an' layin' the wee bunnel o' flennen across her lap.

"A'm nae judge o' waens," sez I, "but that diz luk tae be a brave helthy yin. My what a colour he haes in his cheek a'reddy!"

"An' luk at this yin," sez the tither wuman, haudin' her bunnel doon till me.

"Ir they baith wee boys?" sez I.

"Na," sez Mistress Neevin; "there's a wee boy an' a wee lass."

"Isn't that nice!" sez I; "man, Paddy, A think A see ye sittin' at the fireside wi' yin on ivery knee dannellin' them an' singin' till them."

"We'll get a perambulator," sez Mistress Neevin, "an' wee Paddy wull help his da tae whurl them through the close an' along the roads."

Puir Paddy! We got a lauch oot o' him at last, when he thocht o' the figger he wud cut.

"Cum, stir yersel' up," sez I, "mony a man wud be gled o' yin, let alane twa; A ken fowk that's brekin their hearts acause they hae nae waens."

"A kent there wuz sumthin' dreedfu' gaun till happen," sez he, "that wud rise a talk in the countryside, fur A hae been dreemin' this hale week aboot breid kerts an' things o' that soart rumlin' an' rattlin' aboot the daurs."

"There's yer dreem redd this minit," sez I, fur jist wi' that the breid kert driv up till the close. The driver jumpit aff an' apened the daur o' it, an' the nixt minit in he cummed wi' a cheese in his arms very near the siz o' a kert wheel.

"What dae ye think o' that?" sez he, as he cloddit it doon on the table wi' a thud. "That's a praisent for the mistress frae the boss."

"Man, that's sonsy lukin'," sez I.

"An' jist in the nick o' time," sez Mistress Neevin."

"Ay, ye'll no hae lang tae wait till ye cut it," sez I.

The man lauched whun he seen the waens, an' sez he—

"A sec A em in guid time; ye'll no be like Jamey Muckle o' the Hill Heid."

"What wuz that," sez I.

"Oh, he wuz expectin' sumthin' o' this soart," sez he, "an' had a cheese an' a jar o' stuff laid in three months afore it wuz needit."

"A suppoas it wuz a' used afore that," sez I.

"Na, it wuz not," sez he, "nether him nor the mistress wud let it be lippit, an' whun they did cum fur till use it the cheese wuz that hard that Jamey had till get the servint boy till hag it up wi' the hatchet."

Paddy lauched ower ocht, an' sez he—

"Tam, my boy, that yin deserves sumthin'," an' he gets oot a big kervin' knife an' cuts the cheese clean in twa.

"Sit doon, my boy, an' eat a piece o' breid and cheese," sez he.

"Wait till A finish my wark," sez the man, an' oot he steps an' brings in twa o' the biggest curned loaves iver A seen in my life."

"Noo," A'll eat ocht ye like tae offer me," sez he, "but if ye hae a farl o' hard breid A wud rether eat it till cheese than ocht else."

He hadnae richt sut doon till yin efther anither cum droppin' in, an' Paddy wuz kep' as busy as a nailer cuttin' cheese. A got up an' helpit till han' it roon.

"There's nae sign o' hard times here," sez I.

"Weel, indeed," says Tam Bunt, "my mistress wuz sayin' that it wuz a terble bad saison for sich a thing till happen."

"What fur?" sez I.

"Why," sez he, "luk at the wather an' the craps."

"Agh, haud yer tongue," sez I, "there wuz wather an' craps afore ony o' us wuz born, an' there'll be wather an' craps whun we're awa."

"A'm no sae shair aboot that," sez he; "A think the pritta crap wull be a complete failyer this year."

Sez I, "A hae as guid prittas as iver A had. Thon champions bates ocht ye iver seen."

"It's weel fur ye," sez Tam, "whun A'm diggin' mine ye cud mak champ o' them wi'out iver pittin' them in a pot."

"Weel," sez I, "as far as the waens ir conserved they'll no be wantin' mony prittas this saison onywae, an' the mooth was niver yit sent but there wuz the bits an' sup fur it."

Tam didnae say ocht mair fur he seen that while he wuz talkin' the tither fowk wur eatin', so he fell till an' made up loast time. Yon man wud not be weel, A'm shair, efther what he et!

"Paddy," sez I, "the chris'nin o' wee Paddy wull be naethin' till the chris'nin o' the twuns."

"A'm sayin', Paddy," sez Mistress Neevin, "wull ye hae a big nicht fur the chris'nin' jist for auld times sake?"

"A wull," sez Paddy, "A see there's nae use frettin', an' we maun jist tak' things as they come."

"Noo, that's spauken like a sensible man, Paddy," sez I, hittin' him a slap on the back, "an' there's no a man, wuman, or waen in the country side but wushes ye weel."

A noticed a wheen o' the boys pittin' their heids thegither, an' efter a bit they slippit oot, yin by yin. Whun nicht cummed on A seen what they wur up till. There wuznae a whun dyke for miles roon that wuznae in a bleeze, an' the boys had a' the auld Queen Anne guns and six-an-sixpenny rifles oot, an' ye cudnae a heerd yer ears fur the shots gaun aff.

"Noo, Paddy, my man," sez I, "that shows what the fowk think o' ye an' yer mistress. Why man, if the squire had half a dizen waens the fowk cudnae shew him mair respek than they're tryin' till shew you."

A got him cheered up wonnerfully, an' afore A cum awa he walkit a wheen times up an' doon the hoose wi' a waen in ivery erm, an' wee Paddy hingin' on by his coat tail. Puir fellow, A declare its a peety o' him. But he haes as brave a wee wife as iver a puir man wuz blist wi', an' A hope waur wull niver happen till them nor the arrival o' twuns.

HIS TAY PERTY.

I T'S a peety that fowk iver get auld an' din oot. Jamey Menyarry wuz sayin' that fowk that's cum till my time o' day shud hae sumthin' else tae think aboot nor talkin' blethers. A suppoas A shud be sittin' in the corner girnin' an' whungin' an' grumelin', an' makin' mysel' an' ivery buddy roon me as miserable as possible. A'll niver dae ocht o' the soart. Guid be thankit, it's nae sin tae be mirry, an' there's naethin' diz fowk as muckle guid as a rael hearty fit o' lauchin'. It's better nor doctor's drugs, an' clears awa' the collywabbles frae aboot yer heart.

A has launched that muckle since Paddy's twuns wuz born that A fin' mysel' ten year younger like, an' it's the hale talk in the cuntry side. Peggy an' me wuz jist sittin' hevin' a crack aboot it yin nicht atween day'l-agaun an' bed time, whun wha shud lift the latch an' step in but my brave Paddy M'Quillan.

"Morrow, Rabin," sez he, "what wae ir ye?"

A jumpit till my feet an' gruppit him by the han', an' Peggy run doon the hoose fur a cher, an' whuskit the dust aff it wi' her apron.

"Man, Paddy, bit A'm gled till see ye!" sez I.

"Thank ye," sez he, "an' Peggy, my wuman," sez he, "hoo ir ye gettin' on?"

"A daurnae compleen, Guid be thankit," sez Peggy. "An' hoo's the mistress cumin' on?"

"She's richtly thank ye," sez he.

"An' what aboot the waens," sez I.

"Man, dear, they're growin' ower ocht," sez he, "an' ye wud ken them bigger a'reddy."

"The wee dears," sez Peggy; "A maun be ower the morn's morn till see them."

"A wush ye wud," sez he, "for Maggie wonners what's cum on ye that ye niver luk neer us noo."

"Weel, indeed, indeed, but A wull gang," sez she

Paddy drawed up his cher till the fire, an' sez he—

" Weel, Rabin, A haenae been fit till cum ower as aften this while back as A wud a likit, an' A doot A'll see less o' ye noo nor iver unless ye cum ower till oor hoose."

" What's that fur ?" sez I.

" Agh, man dear, jist luk the wae A'm fixed," sez he, " A thocht it bad enouch whun A used tae rise oot o' my bed in the wunter nights tae dannel up wee Paddy; bit, save my heart, there's three o' them noo. A'm near wrang in the min' thinkin' aboot it."

" Ah, blethers !" sez Peggy, " ye'll niver ken the time gaun roon till they're baith rinnin' aboot."

" Peggy, dear," sez he, " it'll be a lang time till that."

" I seen sumthin' in the paper," sez I, " that wull just anser ye, an if ye hadnae been in the nicht A wud a been ower till a tell't ye aboot it."

" What wuz that ?" sez he.

" Get me my specs, Peggy," sez I, " an' luk if ye can lay yer han' on that paper that Tam Forgysen left in."

" Here it is," sez she.

" Noo Paddy," sez I, " lissen till this, my boy. Here's an advertizement frae a man in Bilfast, that keeps a furneter place, an' it says that he haes a nice dooble peramelater that coast ten pounds, an' that he'll gie it for three pounds."

" Sit up till the fire !" sez Paddy.

That's a kin' o' a bye-word wi' Paddy, an' aye whun he's astonished or weel plesed wi' ocht he'll bring his han' doon wi' a slap on his leg, an' he'll cry—

" Sit up till the fire !"

" A wonner hoo he can sell it sae chape," sez he.

Sez Peggy, sez she, " it's jist a rael Provedenshal thing, Paddy, an' ye shud gang up an' buy it."

" Bit what diz he mean by a double yin ?" sez Paddy.

" Yin for haudin' twa waens," sez I, " an' it's a thing ye cannae dae wi'oot."

" A wuz thinkin' we micht a whurled them aboot in the wheelbarrow," sez he.

" Blethers an' nonsense," sez I; " the time wuz whun ye micht a din that, bit noo-a-days ye cudnae stir fur fowk watchin' ye, an' clatterin' an' talkin' aboot yin anither's affairs, an' ye maun dae the thing gran' if ye want tae get leevin' a quate life."

" A wunner wud he no tak' a poun' for it," sez he.

" A'm shair he wud not," sez I, " it is an erticle that cost ten poun' whun it wuz new ?"

" Weel, A'll speek till Maggie aboot it," sez Paddy, " an' mebee A'll hav a luk at it for A'm gaun up till Bilfast till order sum things for the tay perty."

" Ay, A heerd ye wur gaun till hae a big perty," sez I.

" Sit up till the fire !" sez he. " Did ye heer that ? A declare a buddy cannae speek a wurd but its carried far an' near."

" It's a fact," sez I, " but tell me, whun ir ye gaun up ?"

" A'm no jist shair yit," sez he. " A'll likely gang nixt Thursday, cud ye cum wi' me, dae ye think ?"

" Na, Paddy," sez I, " A maun get my lint pu'd for it's jist a loasin', bit A dae wush A cud gang wi' ye."

" Man, A wush ye cud," sez he, " an' A wud stan' a cup or twa o' koffey in that big place ye used tae gang till."

" A'm quate gaun there," sez I, " they'll no bother their heid attendin' till ye onless yer dressed in yer very best."

" A'll no gang neer them then, if that's the soarts o' them," sez he.

" Ir he gaun tae buy a' the things fur yer perty in Bilfast ?" sez I.

" Indeed A jest am," sez he.

" What's that fur ?" sez Peggy ; " Tam Gunyin'll no be pleased at the order gaun by him."

" He may ether be pleased or no'," sez Paddy, " fur a' that A care. The fowk talks a guid dale aboot his licht wechts, but there's waur nor that the metter wi' him."

" The dear man !" sez I, " what is it ?"

" He needulterates the goods," sez he, " A went in the tither nicht, as Maggie cudnae gang oot, fur a quarter o' tay, an' whun A went in he wuz sittin' wi' his han's stuk up till the elbows in his pokits smokin' a pipe aboot a yerd lang. ' A wuz wantin' a quarter o' yer best tay,' sez I. ' Oh, A'll no' be lang gettin' that fur ye,' sez he, an' he slithered awa till the tither side o' the place he ca's a shap, an' sticks his han' intil an auld roosty tin canister, an' begins scrapin' like a hen amang shunners. ' Gie me the best, noo,' sez I, ' fur A didnae think muckle o' the last,' ' Ye hadnae put enouch in the pot,' sez he. ' A put in fower spoonfu's,' sez I, "for the twa o' us, an' it hadnae the culler o' tay, nor the taste o' it ether. Maggie said it wuz jist like leaves aff the sloe bushes." Sez he, ' There's sumthin'

pekkyoolyer about this tay o' mine; in the furst place, ye shud see that the water's saft, then ye shud put plenty in the pot, an' let it draw a guid while, an' efter a' it'll hae nae grate culler in it, bit then that's the purity o' the erticle.' A' this time he wuz scrapin' at the auld canister an' dunin' it wi' his fiat, an' at last he said he had only twa unce o' it, bit he made up the wecht sum ither place, an' I beleev in my heart he put peet coom in it."

"He wud shairly niver dae that," sez Peggy.

"Weel, at ony rate," sez Paddy, "A hae loast confidence in the man. A hae been heerin' about a place in Bilfast whaur the tay cums strecht frae Indyee for sixteen pence a pun', so A'll try it; then A'm gaun tae buy a hale lot o' tarts an' nice things fur the tay perty', an' A'll gie the fowk sich a nicht as niver wuz in the country."

"Weel, A cud forgie a man for ony yin thing, but sellin' bad tay," sez Peggy.

"A think, Mistress Gordon, A'll get ye till mak' the tay fur us the nicht o' the perty," sez Paddy. "Fur there's no a wuman in the country can set doon a better cup nor you can,"

"She lerned that frae her Granny," sez I, lauchin'. "A'm shair ye hae mony a time heerd the wae auld Betty Mawhunye, that Peggy wuz reered wi', made her first bowl o' tay. Her seyther had been ower in Inglan' sellin' a wheen heifers, an' he bocht a pun' o' tay, an' brocht it hame wi' him, an' gied it till Betty till mak' reddy fur him. Puir Betty had niver seen tay before, but she had the name o' bein' a grate cook, an' cudnae be far stuck, so she boiled the hale pun' o' tay in a half bushel pot, throwed oot the water aff it, clodded in a grate lump o' butter, an' champit a' up wi' the beetle."

"Sit up till the fire!" sez Paddy, hittin' me a slap on my leg till he made it dinnel, an' he lauched ower ocht.

"Wull ye hae mony fowk at the tay perty?" sez I.

"A'll hae mair nor the hoose wull haud," sez he, "an' A wuz wonnerin' hoo it wud dae fur till hae it in the new barn."

"Man it's the very place," sez I, "ye cud sate a hunner fowk in it."

"Ay, if A cud get the sates fur them," sez he.

"An' what's till hinner ye?" sez I, "A'll get ye the len o' the forms at the skuilhoose."

"Man, that's the very thing," sez he, "All tak doon the kert an' get Mickey Mooney till gie me a lift wi' them."

"Is it that lazy fellow?" sez I.

"Agh," sez Peggy, "he's no lazy, the crayter, he wuz jest born tired."

Sez I, "He's that fat an' lazy that he'll throw himsel' doon in the corner, an' lie there till ye wud lift him. A'll gang doon wi' ye mysel', Paddy."

"A'm fur iver obleeged till ye," sez he, "an' whun yer sae kin, you an' Peggy micht think ower what we shud christen the waens. Ye see there's twa this time, an' A dinnae ken whaur we'll get names fur them baith."

Puir Paddy! My bit he's a saft, kin'-hearted crayter!

"Cud ye tell me," sez he, "what haes becum o' auld Nancy MacLane that she haesnae been aboot this while back. We wur wantin' her till gie us a han' the nicht o' the perty daen wee odds an' ends, bit Maggie says she haesnae seen her this echt or ten days."

"Oh, indeed A can tell ye that," sez Peggy, "did ye no' heer what happened till her? She wuz up at the Squire's helpin' tae clean the hoose, an' he heerd her compleen o' bein' terble bad wi' the roomytics in her legs, so he gied her aboot a pint o' brandy in a bottle, an' made her promise till rub the sair places wi' it. What diz my brave Nancy dae whun she gets hame, but she drinks the brandy, an' then rubs her legs wi' the empty bottle."

"Sit up till the fire!" sez Paddy.

"It's as true as yer there," sez Peggy, an' she got that drunk she didnae ken what she wuz aboot. Her dochter Ann wuz makin' broth, an' Nancy ploups her han' intil the boilin' pot tae grape ether fur the beef or a dumplin', but she got what she hadnae bargained for. It kin' o' sobered her fur a minit, an' she flew doon the hoose till hide frae Ann, an' got a towel tae rowl up her han' in, an' then she tummeld intil bed an' fell asleep. But the best o' it a' wuz that she wuz that drunk she rowled up the wrang han' an' whun she waukened up the sair yin wuz blistered till the very elbow, an' she's no fit till be oot iver since. Puir buddy, she cummed up till get me tae pit a powltis on it!"

* * * * *

The nicht afore the tay perty, Paddy M'Quillan an' me went doon till the Bellycuddy Juncshun, fur the fowk he bocht the things frae wur till sen' them doon by the last train. Sumthin' had happened till keep the train aboot half an hoer late, bit whun

A remarkit that till Paddy, he said that it beat till be the wecht o' his things that wuz keepin' her back.

"Blethers," sez I. "Ye dinnae mean till tell me that ye hae that muckle stuff."

"A hae indeed," sez he, "ye niver seen ocht like it."

"What hae ye been buyin' onywae?" sez I.

"A declare A cud har'ly tell ye, Rabin," sez he, "in the furst place A hae three hunner wecht o' loaves, an' buns, an' cakes, an' sally lums, that A bocht. Then A hae aboot sixty pun wecht o' beef, sum o' it nice an' tenner fur the weemin fowk, an' ither bits o' it shootable fur the likes o' Jamey Menyarry, an' A hae ten pun o' tay."

Wi' that A heerd the train cumin' up alang as slow as ocht.

"Luk at thon," sez Paddy, "she can har'ly move; an' man, lissen the wae her wheels ir squcelin' wi' the wecht o' the boxes A hae in her."

It wuz nae winner Paddy talkit, fur raelly he had a sayrious lot o' things. We had the fu' o' the kert o' boxes an' hampers an' barrels, an' they auld meer wuz gie an' warm whun we got hame. We went intil the barn till pack them in a corner, but mebbe we didnae get a surprise. There wuz Sarah Jane Mewhunye an' Susanna Broon, an' Mary Ann Mekonkey, an' half a dizen ither lasses busy dressin' the wa's wi' laurels an' teeshy paper, an' big bunches o' flooers. A declare it wuz darlin'. Jist as ye steppit in the daur the furst thing that gruppit yer een wuz the word "Welkim," made oot o' green leaves, nailed till the wa', an' then at yin en' they had in grate big letters, "Long live the Twins." It wuz real purty, an' whun Paddy seen it he wuz cleen owercum, an' had tae sit doon for a bit.

"Cum awa' intae the kitchen, Paddy," sez I, "an' let the lasses get on wi' their wark."

So we went in an' had a bit crack, an' afore A left him he made me promise till gang across early the nixt day.

It got oot through the country aboot the wae the lasses had dressed up the barn, an' behold ye the boys thocht they wudnae be ahint them. What diz they dae but sumwhaur aboot twenty o' them gethers thegither the nixt mornin' jist as daylight wuz breckin' an' didn't they fa' till, an' afore denner time they had Paddy's lint pu'd an' tied up, an' put in the holes. Paddy wuz terble weel pleased. He wantit them tae stap fur their denners, but they wudnae dae it.

Hooaniver they tell't him that they wud mak' up fur it whun nicht cum.

Weel, a wonnerfu' nicht it wuz. Peggy went ower in the fore part o' the day till gie a han', an' ivery thing wuz rael weel din. Whun A went intil the barn that nicht it wud a din yer heart guid till a seen it, an' the happy lauchin' faces a' roon ye. The minit they seen me they cried oot fur a cheer fur "Rabin," an' they made the rafters ring. They had a' the lamps in the country A think, an' the place wuz jist in a bleeze. The Eleck Trick Light wuz naethin' till it, an' ye cud a seen till a pickit up pins an' needles. The fowk wur a' dressed in their best, an' the lasses had darlin' ribbons tied in their hair an' roon their necks. The crayters! bit they did luk nice. A had nae noshin A wud a seen Tam Gunyin there, bit he wuz yin o' the first my een gruppit whun A went in. He had a dickey on him that A hae seen in Sam Tamson's shap wundey for three simmers rinnin'. A kent it in a minit by the spots on it.

Bit A wush ye had seen the tables. They wur a' covered wi' nice cleen white sheets an' tableclaiths, an' frae en' till en' they wur loaded wi' eatables. There wuz white breid an' butter, soda scones, split baps toasted an' buttered, Sally lums, tarts, curned loaves, hard breid, wheatmeal buns, broon barneys, barney-bracks an' jam o' a' sorts. At yin en' o' the barn they had the threshin' boards prappit up on fower barrels, an' that wuz loaded wi' breid an' beef. Barney Quinn wuz there, an' he had a big gully knife cuttin' up the beef intil slices, an' ivery noo an' then ye wud a heerd him gien it a screed along the sberpin' stane till he wud a put yer teeth on edge.

A got them the loan o' the meetin' hoose boiler till mak' the tay in, but the boys thocht they wudnae be able till fill their kettles fast enouch, an' what diz they dae bit they emptied the tay oot intil crocks, an' got a wheen quart tins, an' A deklare but it wuz the handiest wae o' fillin' up their kettles an' taypots iver A seen.

A wuz stannin' lukin' aboot me whun lang Sam Steevyson cummed up till me an' sez he—

"Can ye no get a sate, Rabin?"

"Oh, ay, thank ye," sez I, "A'll warn't ye A'll get sittin' doon whun A tak the noshin."

"Ye can tak thon sate that A wuz on if ye like," sez he, "fur A'm gaun ower till the table here whaur your Peggy's pursidin'."

"Wur ye no comfortable?" sez I.

" A wuz comfortable eneuch," sez he, " but she's a terble purlite wuman that's makin' tay at it, an' the cups ir about the size o' egg shells. A'll gaun ower till Peggy's table fur A see she haes got pint mugs."

" Weel, dinnae hurt yersel', whatever ye dae," sez I, an' A went awa, an' left him.

Jist wi' that the eatin' begood. A didnae tak ocht, but jist dannered aboot watchin' the tithers, an' it wuz a doonricht treat. My! bit the country air diz gie fowk the queer appetites. Thon tart things wur niver made fur country fowk. A seen Jamey Menyarry eatin' sayven or echt o' them till yin cup o' tay. He niver tuk his e'en aff the plate they wur on, an' ye wud a thocht they wur jist happin' aff the plate, an' doon his throat. Thon big han' o' his wud a gruppit yin, an' ye wud see a seen him carryin' it up till his mooth as canny as if he wuz han'lin eggs. Weel, then, he wud jest a laid it on the en' o' his tongue, an' that wuz a' wuz aboot it. A seen Mistress Neevin watchin' him an' A suppoas she thocht he wud lave nane for the rest, fur A heers her saying till him—

" Try yin o' them wheaten buns, Jamey."

" Thank ye," sez he, " A'm terble fond o' these things whatever ye ca' them," an' wi' that he picks up anither yin, an' sen's it efter the tithers. He got nae mair, though, fur yin o' the boys jist whuppit up the plate, an' tuk it till the tither en' o' the table.

" A'll try that sally lum," sez Jamey, an' wi' that he lifted a great big slice.

" It's feerd o' ye, Jamey," sez Bab Crothers, " luk the wae its trimlin'."

" It is delikate lukin'," sez Jamey. " A wonner hoo muckle it coasts by the perch."

Sez I, tae mysel', " Boy A'll awa an' get ye a bit o' thon beef," so A slippit doon tae the threshin' boards. Wully Muckanally wuz tryin' till cut a big loaf intil slices, but he cudnae cut it strecht fur the life o' him.

" Hoots, man!" sez I, " whumle it ower on its side an' slice it doon like a turnip, the wae Peggy diz."

Barney Quinn wuz gie an' tired lukin', an' wuz wipin' his face wi' his rubber.

" A want a peece o' beef, Barney," sez I.

" Is it for yersel', Rabin?" sez he, whuppin' up his knife an' gien it a screed on the scythestane.

"Na," sez I, "its fur Jamey Menyarry; he's eatin' a' afore him, an' A want sumthin' that'll take him busy tae make awa wi'."

Barney lauched, an' sez he, "A hae sumthin' here that'll jest fit ye."

"Is it grisle?" sez I.

"A think its leather," sez he, "for it haes knockit the edge aff my knife twa or three times."

Weel, he haggit an' sawed, an' sawed an' haggit, an' at last he laid a peece aboot a pun' wecht on a plate, an' sez he—

"Let him try his teeth on that."

A dannered across till whaur he wuz sittin', an' sez I—

"Jamey, A doot yer no half gettin' yer tay."

"Oh, A'm no' daein' bad ava," sez he.

"Mebbe, ye cud eat a bit beef," sez I.

"Man A cud that," sez he, "A wud face ocht that wudnae speak till me."

"Weel, here's a peece aff that prize bullock that Paddy bocht," sez I, an' A laid doon the plate fornenst him.

Barney cum slippin' up efter me till see the fun, an' laid a knife an' fork doon aside the plate. Jamey liftit the knife an' gied the fork twa or three dabs afore it made ony impresshun on the beef. then he begood a sawin' at it wi' the knife.

"Why, ye maun hae the back o' yer knife at it," sez I.

"A doot A hae," sez he, an' then he tried the tither side, but he cum nae better forder. "Barney," sez he, "ye nicht gie it a rub on yer sberpin' stane."

"Agh, man, yer only loasin' time," sez Barney, "throw doon the knife an' grup it in yer han's."

"Heth, A'll jist tak yer advice," sez he. He clodded doon his knife an' fork, an' afore ye cud say Jack Robyson he whuppit up the meat an' fell till wi' his teeth. The furst teer he made, it floo oot o' his mouth like Indyin rubber, an' his head floo back, an' hit big John Liggitt, the man that warks wi' the stane masons, sich a slap that he spilled his mug o' boilin' tay a' doon the inside o' his weskit. A declare A lauched till A thocht A wud a dee'd. John jumpit till his feet an' made till teer his claes aff, an' ye wud a heerd the roars o' him like a bull calf a' through the barn. Yin o' the lasses whuppit up a jug o' cauld water an' dasbed it aboot him. That made him waur nor afore, an' he tore oot o' the barn the wae A hae seen Wully's water dug daein' whun wee Paddy ties the tin can at his tail.

"Run efter him fast," sez Mistress Neevin, "fur he'll tak sum-buddy's life fur destroyin' his nice hankerchey that he had roon his neck, an' the crayter," sez she, "he wuz takin' sich a nice hearty tay that he forgot he had sich a thing on him."

Dick Dunwoody, Wully Mucklewane, an' twa or three ithers o' us run oot efter John Liggitt, as hard as we wur fit. We got him doon on his knees in the stackyard rubbin' his shurtbreest wi' a wisp o' hey, an' roarin' like a waen.

"Haud yer tongue, man," sez I, "ye'll be a' richt in twa or three minits."

My, we wud a thocht the big sabs wud a chokit him. We tuk him intil the hoose, an' Paddy lent him a cleen shurt, but we had terble bother gettin' him tae gang back tae the barn.

"Is he badly burned, John?" sez I.

"Man, Rabin, A em that," sez he, "A feel as if the skin wud a' cum aff my breest, bit A'm in mair bother aboot my nice necktie nor ocht else. Man, the lasses wur a' talkin' aboot it, bit ochanee, it's cleen destroyed."

"Hoots, blethers!" sez I, "cum awa an' finish yer tay, an' think nae mair aboot it."

Weel, we got him back, an' the fowk wur that busy they niver notised us. The breid wuz a guid dale skerser on the tables by that time, an' sum o' the boys wur gie an' lazy lukin' at the eatin. A'm tell't that ye wud a thocht there wuz gaun till be prizes gien for wha wud eat maist, the wae sum o' them walked intil the vittels. Mickey M'Gurk drunk sixteen cups o' tay, et a big slice o' loaf an' butter till ivery cup, an' they tell't me he jist made aboot twa bites o' every slice. Mistress Chermisides wuz presidin' at the table he wuz at, an' she deklared till me that her arms wur achin' poorin' oot tay. She wuz terbly taen on wi' M'Gurk, an' efter he finished the sixteenth cup, she sez till him, sez she—

"Cum, Mickey, there's a drap mair in the kettle yit."

"A'm as fu' as iver A can haud, mem," sez Mickey.

"Nonsense, man," sez she, "try anither cup, an' eat a bit scon till it; hao, there's a lice buttered yin."

"Indeed, indeed, Mistress Chermisides," sez he, "A wud obleege ye as fas as ony wuman A ken, but raily an' truly A em not able."

A cudnae help lauchin'. Wully Davidson tuk sich a fancy till the soda breid that my Peggy baikit that A seen him stuffin' a wheen farls o' it intil his tap coat pokit. A wuz gaun tae tak'

a rise oot o' him aboot it, bit jist wi' that A heerd the fowk cheerin' ower ocht an' whun A lukit roon, there wuz Paddy an' his mistress cumin' steppin' in, erm in erm, an' Mistress M'Killop an' Mistress Annerson carryin' the twuns.

As A wuz yin o' the suldest in the company A steppit forrit an' bid them welkim. The waens had been chrisened in the hoose in the parisence o' a wheen friens. The minister didnae approve o' the gatherin' in the barn, an' as him an' me had haen a bit tift ower the heid o' the instraymental music questyin, A kep' oot o' the road. They ca'd the wee lass Jemima, an' the wee boy Samuel George, fur his twa grandas.

A tuk Mistress M'Quillan up till the en' o' the barn an' set her doon in a nice cushined cher that we had there fur the purpose, an' Paddy sut doon aside her. A wush ye had heerd the remarks o' the fowk aboot the waens, an' the questyins they axed me, jist as if A kent a' aboot them. Sez Hammy Blizzard, sez he—

"A hope they chrisened the wee lass furst."

"What fur?" sez I.

"A'm tell't," sez Archie Gourley, "that it's no lucky till chrisen a wee boy an' a wee lass oot o' the same bowl o' water."

"It's waur nor that," sez Hammy, "fur if ye happen till pit the water on the wee lass last, she'll hev the whuskers, an' the boy wull no hev a hair on his face."

A left a wheen o' them argeyen ower that, an' went tae hae a luk at the waens. Puir wee dears, bit they lukit nice. Wee Jemima wuz dressed in a lang white robe, wi' a blue cloak trimmed wi' white quilted silk, an' she had a darlin' wee white silk bonnet on her heid. It wuz Sarah Jane Dalyell made a' the claes, an' there's no a lass frae Bellycuddy till Killygullib haes a better pair o' han's on her. Then' wee Samuel George wuz as gran' as the wee lass. A deklare, but he had a blue velvet coat an' a white hat. They jist lukit darlin', an' ye cudnae a got neer them for the wae the weemen fowk gethered roon them.

"My, bit the wee lass is like her ma," sez yin.

"Ay, bit she haes Paddy's c'en," sez anither.

"Is she begood tae teethe yit?" sez anither.

A think the waen got scaured, fur she puckered up her wee face, an' begood tae roar, an' the mistress had tae cuddle her up an' begin tae croon a sang tae her. Nancy M'Lean wuz stannin'

ahint Paddy wi' a mug o' tay in yin han' an' a lump o' breid an' butter in the tither.

"Nancy, my wuman," sez I, "them waens is a credit till ye; A'm tell't ye hae helpit tae tek' cherge o' them."

"A did a' A cud fur them," sez she.

"Ye didnae forget tae shake a grane o' saut on them afore they wur chrisined, A hope," sez Marget M'Cleesh.

"A'll warrant ye A did not," sez Nancy. "A whumeled baith o' them three times roon on my knee an' shakit saut on them afore his riverence cum in."

"What did ye dae that fur?" sez I.

"Why, tae keep the fairies aff them," sez Nancy.

Wee Samuel George wuz lyin' lakin' roon him an' sookin' his finger. Sez I till his ma—"Mistress M'Quillan, dinnae let him lern that fashin if ye can help it. Oor wee Wully sookit his whun he wuz a waen, an' we didnae get him brauk aff it fur mony a lang day."

"Pit a taste o' soot on it," sez Nancy.

"Cum, lasses, tak' yer sates an' sit doon till we hae sum amusement," sez Barney Quinn. "A move," sez he, "that Paddy M'Quillan gies us a sang."

The men a' clappit their han's at that an' cheered.

"Agh, boys, ye ken richtly A cannae sing," sez Paddy; "sum o' the rest can gie us a verse."

"Oh, deed ye'll sing," sez Barney; "cum, boys, Paddy fur a sang."

Puir Paddy he lukit this road an' he lukit the tither, bit the fowk kept cryin' fur a sang, an' at last he got till his feet. A niver heerd him singin' afore, bit he did it rael weel, an' A'll gie the words if ye can pit a tune till them, fur A beleev Paddy made it himself.

PADDY'S SANG.

Oh, cum all ye boys an' girls so gay.

An' lissen well unto my lay,

An' if to wed you are inclined

Some good advice in it ye'll find,

Ri-toor-a-loo-ral-ay.

Oh, when furst I met my Maggie fair,

My heart was fil'led with despair.

But I screwed my courage up one day.

And thus unto her I did say,

Ri-toor-a-loo-ral-ay.

" My lovely girl, with hazel eye,
 For you I'd lay me down and a-die.
 Oh, I'll buy you gold, I'll buy you pearl,
 If you will fancy me, my girl,"
 Ri-toor-a-loo-ral-ay.

Sez she, " Yer gold won't flatter me
 For to leev my ma an' go with ye,
 For it's what I never intend at all
 To go at any young man's call,"
 Ri-toor-a-loo-ral-ay.

Oh, I could not think for to go away.
 So unto her I then did a-say,
 " My hand is hard, but my heart is true
 And I can a-fancy none but you."
 Ri-toor-a-loo-ral-ay.

She said nae mair, but I saw her smile,
 And she pulled at her apron strings awhile,
 Then I pressed the damsel to my heart,
 And said " My dear, we will never part."
 Ri-toor-a-loo-ral-ay.

So now my roving days are a-past
 An' the girl I loved is mine at last :
 The bonnie girl that said me " nay "
 Is my joy and blessing iver day
 Ri-toor-a-loo-ral-ay.

" Sit up till the fire, boy ! " sez Barney Quinn, an' the fowk
 cheered an' clapit their han's ower ocht.

Hammy Blizzard cum up alangside o' me afore the fowk had
 quat cheerin', an' whuspered till me—

" Rabin, cum awa intil the kitchen twa or three minits, A want
 tae speek till ye."

" A wull dae that, Hammy," sez I, an' so A followed him oot
 o' the barn an' across the close till the kitchen daur. It wuz shut,
 an' Hammy put his mooth till the key hole, an' sez he—

" Apen the daur, Tam, it's me an' Rabin."

The daur wuz apened, then, bit we hadnae got richt inside till it wuz shut agen, an' A heerd Tam Miskelly pittin' the bar in it, an' sez Hammy Blizzard, sez he—

"Noo, Tam, yer no tae apen that daur tae man, wuman, or waen till A tell ye."

"In the name o' common sense, boys, what ir ye aboot, ava? Is it makin' Masons ye ir?" sez I.

"Sit doon, Rabin," sez Hammy, "till A tell ye what we're up till. We're gaun tae mak' a praisintaishin tae Paddy an' his Mistress jist till show the regerd we hae fur them."

"Weel, boys, that's very dacent o' ye," sez I, "whun are ye gaun tae dae it?"

"This very nicht," sez Hammy, "ye'll fin' A'm the boy's no' lang aboot a thing whun A tak' it in han's, an' there cud be nae time fitter than the nicht whun so mony o' their weel wushers ir roon aboot them. Noo, A'm feered o' sum o' them weemin cumin in on us afore we get reddy, so haud yer tongues ivery yin o' ye till A tell Rabin a' aboot it."

"The deer man I" sez I, "bit this is ower ocht."

Sez Hammy, sez he, "Ye hae min' o' the advertisement ye seen in the paper aboot the man that had the dooble peramelater tae sell. Weel, a wheen o' us made up the price o' it, an' yin day whun John M'Cluskey wuz in Bilfast, wi' a load o' prittaes he called tae see it, an' a darlin' yin it wuz, so he bocht it an' tell't the man whun it wud be wantit, an' a rael dacent man Mester Charles wuz. He said he kent you weel, Rabin, fur he had seen ye in mony a Freemason ludge, an' that he did like tae read yer stories. We tell't him we cudnae tak' it hame wi' us, acause we didnae want ony o' the neibours tae see it, so he said he wud keep it till the very day an' sen' it by the train. It arrived this efternoon. Man, it's a rael beauty, an' as strong as ocht. Luk here, an' he apened the room daur, an' whurled up the purtiest wee coach iver ye set yer e'en on.

"Noo, boys," sez Hammy, "let me oot, an' keep the daur shut till A cum back."

"Whaur ir ye gaun?" sez I.

"A'm gaun fur the twuns," sez he, "we're gaun tae whurl them intil the barn."

Awa he went, an' in aboot five minits he cums back an' Mistress Neevin wi' him carryin' the twa waens. A wheen minits settled a' They had nae address reddy, bit they tell't me that as A wuz Paddy's

best frien A wuz till mak' the praisentashin fur them an' say a wheen words.

Weel, they run the peramelater oot intil the close an' set the twuns intil it, an' A gruppit the hannel an' whurled them along as canny as ocht. Ye niver seen or heerd ocht like it whun we got intil the big barn. There wuz a passage kep' cleer up the middle, an' as A whurled up the coach the cheers o' the fowk wud a deevened ye. A stappit it in frunt o' Paddy, an' his mistress, an' they did not ken whaur they wur sittin'.

"Cum, boys! try if ye can be quate," sez Barney Quinn. Hammy Blizzard gied me a dunch wi' his elbow tae begin, so A cleered my throat, and sez I—

"Mister and Mistress M'Quillan, on behalf o' a few o' yer friens an' weel-wushers, A beg till praisent ye wi' this peramelator. (Cheers.) It's true it's bit a sma' gift, bit it shows what the fowk think o' ye baith, an' if it wuz better ye wud be as welkim till it. (Cheers.) An' A may say that if the thing had been made public ye wud a got sumthin' far better an' bigger, bit A may tell ye that it wuz jist meent fur a wee surprise, an' wuz kep' that quate that A niver heerd ocht aboot it till ten minits ago. (Sit up till the fire!) An' A think its only richt to gie the names o' yer friens that got this up for ye, an' there's no truer men in the coonty. It wuz Dick Hoolahan, o' Bellygullib; Johnny M'Cluskey, o' Bellyclabber; Wully Mucklewane, o' Cloghole; Tam Miskelly, o' Magherasculyan; an' my dacent frien, Hammy Blizzard, o' Bellygulder. (Loud cheers.) An' noo, permit me till say that A had nae time till mak' up a speech, bit A wush ye baith lang life an' happiness. May yer days rowl along as nice an' pleesintly as the wheels o' this peramelator wull whun they're weel oiled, an' may ye hae mony an mony's the pair o' twuns till ride in it." (Cheers.)

My, the fowk did lauch an' cheer, an' they made Paddy cum forrit an' wheel it three times up an' doon the barn. A'll niver forget it as lang as A leev. A deklare A lauched till my sides wuz sair. Then Paddy tuk a waen in ivery erm, an' returned thanks, an' efter that we gied three cheers fur Mistress M'Quillan, an' three mair fur the twuns, an' then we a' went hame. There wuznae yin there bit wuz weel pleased; ay, even John Liggitt forgot his aksident, an' lauched like a boy, an' frae that till this we hae niver din talkin' aboot

PADDY M'QUILLAN'S TAY PERTY.

M'QUILLAN ABROAD.

PADDY M'QUEELAN'S awa till Canada. Puir fella! Mony a happy day him an' mo haes spent thegither, an' mony a hearty lauch we hae a' enjoyed ower the heid o' his trip tae Glesco, his coortships an' merridge, niver speekin' of the chris'nin o' wee Paddy an' the big tay perty that wuz gien in honor o' the twuns. Weel, the trip till Glesco wud be like a drap in the bucket compered wi' his lang sail across the seas till that big cuntry whaur they tell me the sun harly iver gangs doon an' whaur there's breid fur ivery buddy that's wullin' till wark fur it.

My, hoo we wull miss him! Peggy haes fretted ower ocht, an' the tears aye comes intil her e'en whun she begins till talk about the wee waens haen till gang across the sea. A cheer her up by tellin' her that nae metter hoo bad things ir they micht be waur.

"Oh, ay, Rabin," sez she, yin day, "nae metter what happens ye aye say that, but whun A see yin efter anither gaun awa it makes me jest loas a' heart."

"It's hard enough, dochter, tae be shair," sez I, "but what wud ye say if yer auld Rabin had tae gang tae Amerikey or New-a-Zerlan'?"

"Agh, Rabin deer, dinnae talk about that," sez she, an' then the apron gangs up till her e'en. "That wud be mair nor A cud be fit tae beer."

"Dinnae be scaured, dochter," sez I, "its mebbe no lang A hae tae leev an' A wud like whun A dee tae lie in the auld place."

"If ye iver dae gang ye maun tak me wi' ye," sez Peggy. "fur A cudnae mair leev athoot ye nor A cud leev athoot meat."

"A shairly wull, Peggy," sez I. "We hae been ower lang thegither tae be iver sayperated. God help the auld buddies that haes tae end their days in the wurkhouse, fur they seyparate man an' wife there."

"Dae they, Rabin?"

"They dae, dear. Jest as if it wuznae bad enough tae shut them up frae a' the wurl an' feed them on papper's meat, athoot no lettin' them help yin anither till beer their trubble."

"Weel, Rabin, its a sin and a shame," sez she; "an' guid luck cudnae follow the fowk that maks them laws. A used tae think puir-hooses was usefu' places, but whun ye tell me that, A wud like tae see them swep' aff the face o' the erth."

"Ye ken little aboot them, dear," sez I; "there's mony a thing aboot them that's far waur nor that, an' the suiner the hale rick-ma-tik o' them's cleered oot the better it'll be fur the cuntry."

Hooaniver, A'm wanrin' awa frae my subjek, an' I maun tell ye aboot Paddy, an' what tuk him awa. Paddy went tae the Lan' Coort tae get his rent pu'd doon, but he didnae mak very muckle o' it. A wush A had time tae tell ye the scene atween him an' the men that they ca' "Lan' Komishiners." It wud a din ye guid till a heerd it. Paddy loast his temper wi' them an' ca'd them onything bit gentlemen. "Yer a nice lot o' boys," sez he, "tae be gaun throo the cuntry pittin velye on the fowks lan'. It's leadin' aboot a donkey a wheen o' ye shud be; why, A deklare there's some o' ye wudnae ken a swade turnip frae a mangel-weezil!"

The fermers roared an' lauched, an the Komishioners got sae angerry they wur gaun tae pit him oot o' the coort. Weel, the en' o' it wuz that Paddy yokit the meer in the kert the very nixt day, an' driv awa thoot iver sayin' a wurd tae his mistress or ony yin else aboot whaur he wuz gaun. That nicht, jest as Peggy an' me wur sittin' doon till oor tay, in steppit Paddy, an' a face on him as lang as it wuz the day the twuns wuz born. Peggy jumpit tae her feet an' set him a cher, an' sez she—

"My, Paddy, A'm terble gled tae see ye. An' hoo's a' wi' ye this wather?"

"Middlin', thank ye," sez he, an' he gied a grate big seegh.

"What's wrang, Paddy?" sez I; "is it twuns this time agen?"

He lauched, an' sez he—

"Na, Rabin, it's no as bad as that; I'm gaun till Amerikey."

"Agh, haud yer tongue," sez I. "It's tryin' tae tak' a rise oot o' me ye ir."

"A'm speekin' the truth," sez he. "Wha cud leev in this cuntry? A thocht whun the Lan' Laws wur passed we micht a wraseld on a while, but iverything's gaun tae pigs an' whussels. Did ye iver see ocht like them fellas they ca' Lan' Komishiners. Whun A had the spade oot turnin' up the grun fur them that day they wur on my ferm yin o' them says tae me, whun we wur up on the whunny knowes—

"Cum, my maun," sez he, "pit in yer spade! That's first-rate soil; if we wurnae lukin' at ye A'm shair ye cud dig it up like a gerden."

"A lukit at him a wee minit tae see whuther A shud streck him or no', an' then sez I—'Mebbe ye wud pit aft yer kid gloves an' tak the spade yersel'.' 'Remember,' sez he, 'yer talkin' tae gentlemen.' 'Ay, there's a heap o' gentlemen gaun aboot,' sez I. 'Yer an unmannerly fella,' sez he. Sez I—'Ye hae mair guid claes nor menners yersel'.' He said nae mair, but A dae think he made the tithers o' them gang agen me in the Coort."

Peggy spauk oot, an' sez she—

"But, Paddy, dear, shairly yer no gaun tae lee the cuntry?"

"A em indeed, Mistress Gordon," sez he. "A wuz awa the day engagin' the aukshineer, tae sell my ferm an' the bits o' things aboot the hoose, an' the plekerds wull be stuk up a' ower the cuntry the morrow; an' as the shippin' agents allow ye tae tak' a wheen o' things wi' ye, A made arrangements tae hae them tak'n tae the boat."

"An' what about the mistress an' waens," sez Peggy.

"A'll tak' them wi' me," sez he; "dae ye think A wud lee them ahint me?"

We coaxed him tae tak' a cup o' tay, but the crayter wuz jest chokin' wi' vexation an' anger.

"Na, thank ye," sez he, "A cudnae eat a bite, my heart's that fu'. It's hard, hard tae hae tae gaun awa frae the place whaur A wuz bred an' born, me an' my feythers afore-me."

"Mebbe ye'll think better o' it," sez I, "Ye ken whaur ye ir, but ye dinna ken whaur yer gaun."

"That's a' very true," sez he, "but shair A cudnae be waur nor A em. A hae helth an' the use o' my limbs, an' wi' the money that A'll get fur my ferm A'm no yin hair scaured but A'll get on bravely in Canady. Man, A wush Lord Dufferin wuz there noo. A wud gang tae see him the first thing, an' he wudnae be lang tellin' me hoo tae start."

Paddy riz an' went awa then. He wuznae weel oot o' the daur till Wully Mucklewane cum in.

"Did ye hear aboot Paddy M'Queelan?" sez he.

"A did that man," sez I.

"Dae ye think he wull gang?" sez he.

"Ay. A beleeve his min's made up," sez I, "an' A'm terble vexed aboot it."

"Weel, A'm shair so em I," sez he, "fur Paddy's aboot as dacent a fella as iver brank breid, an' there's yin thing A can tell ye, we'll gie him sich a perty afore they gang awa' as there niver wuz heerd tell o' in the hale Coonty Doon."

Twa days efter that A seen the aukshin bills stuk up on a' the gate pillars, trees, an' wa's aboot the cuntry side. It did vex me. A had my specs on readin' yin o' them whun Jamey Menyarry cummed forrit an' sez he—

"Weel, Rabin, wull ye be fur buyin' Paddy M'Qucelan's ferm?"

"Na, Jamey, A wull not," sez I. "A hae as muckle as A can wark wi'."

"Heth an' if it ganga chape A wud like tae get it," sez he.

"Ye'll niver turn a sod o' it," sez I.

"An hoo's that?" sez he.

"Acause it'll no gang chape enouch for ye," sez I. "The yin wull bid again the tither till it'll gang far ayont its velye. The fowk cries out aboot heech rents but they hae jist themsels tae blame fur it."

"It's nae hern till be wantin' lan' whun ye can pye fur it," sez Jamey.

"Oh, no yin bit," sez I, "an' you're the boy that's gie an' land o' it; yer nearly as bad as Sammy Muckleyorum."

"What wuz that?" sez he.

"Did ye niver heer aboot him?" sez I. "He wuz aye grabbin' up lan' whauriver he cud get it, an' takin' it ower ither fowk's heids; but yin day he de'ed, as we a' maun, an' whun they wur buryin' him in Greyaba the grave wuznae wide eneuch, an' Billy Magilton the gravedigger had tae fa' till it agen. Auld Herry Creevy, that iverbuddy kens, wuz stannin' by, an' sez he, "Dear, oh dear, Sammy Muckleyorum wuz aye gantin' fur lan' an' noo he cannae get the braidth o' his back!"

Jamey went awa wi' that.

It happint jest as A said. There wuz grate biddin' fur the ferm, an' it wuz knockit doon till a brave dacent man. A wuz gled tae see Paddy gettin' sich a guid bit o' money fur it.

Paddy axed me tae gang up tae Bilfast wi' him for a day an' help him tae buy a wheen things that he wanted. Of coorse, A cudnae refuse tae dae that. Behold ye, but whun A got till Belly-cuddy Junction on the day appointed hadn't Paddy his mistress an' a' the waens hingin' on by her skirts. He tell't me that he wuz

gaun tae hae them a' fottygrafted so that his friends wud hae their pikters whun they wud be far awa. A said it wuz maist thochtful on his pert.

My, it was a terble day's shappin' an' walkin' throo Biffast. Furst we went till buy twa big trunks—yin fur Mistress M'Queelan an' the tither fur Paddy. The shapman wuz very kin' wi' Paddy; he wushed him success, an' says he—"My man, ye neednae care wha sees yer trunks, fur better yins cudnae be made."

Nixt we went tae the fottygraffer. Sez I—"A hope the waens ill no roar, or gie ye ony trubble." "Nae fear o' that," says he, "waens niver roar here."

An' nether they did. He made wee Paddy stan' aside a rockin' horse. Yin o' the twuns sut on his da's knee, an' the tither yin on her ma's knee. There wuznae a cheep oot o' yin o' them. An' darlin' pikters they ir. My, he's a wonnerfu' man thon fottygraffer. He jest lukit throo his wuden box for a minit, an' then says he—"Steddy, noo." Then he squeezed a wee Indye-rubber ba' an' the hale jab was ower. A wush a cud dae thon.

Then we went tae buy the passage tickets. My, but he's a terble nice man thon, he tuk Mrs. M'Queelan an' the waens roon till the fire, an' made them sit doon an' warm themselves, he gaed the waens epples, an' talkit till us rael nicely. He tell't us we were in grate luck, for the Lake Manitoba wud sail frae Biffast in ten days. He said she wuz yin o' the finest steamers on the Canadian Pacific line, an' he promised tae speak tae the capten till gie orders that Paddy an' his femily wud be made cumfortable. My but yon's the wonnerful place, the fowk that wuz cumin' in wuz ower ocht, an' they wur bookin' fur Canada, Australia, New Zealand, an' in fact for a' perts o' the wurl. Dae ye ken but it made ma hert sair whun A thocht o' poor auld Irelan' an' hoo the fowk were a' lain' her ahunt. A saw aboot a dizen clerks yoner, ahint the counter talkin' tae the fowk, an' my but they cud talk, they cud hae ye a' ower the wurl in a wheen minits, a fairly beleev yon chaps haes swallowed Maps o' the Wurl'. My, but they wud mak' fine sea captens.

Efter that we had oor denner, an' by the time we had din a' oor shappin' an' got hame, we wur purty tired.

There wuz a fareweel perty an' dance got up, an' a grate affair it wuz. The boys had a meetin' in the skuleroom till mak' their arrangements. A wheen o' them wanted till gang roon the neibours an' invite them by wurd o' mooth, but ithers o' them wudnae heer

tell o' that, so they went tae a prenter an' got a hale hunner o' kerds prented in goold letters. The skule-mester backit the envilopes fur them, an' A can tell ye what it is, but the letter carrier had a jab o' it fur a wheen days gien them oot, hooaniver the boys pried him twa or three shillin' fur his bother. We had the perty in the skulehoose, an' A suppoas sich a getherin' niver wuz seen afore. The fowk that wuz inside wuz naethin' ava till what wuz roon the daurs. Ivery fella about the hale cuntry side wuz there. They had gethered cartloads o' whuns an' biggit them up here an' there along the roadside, an' A dinnae ken hoo muckle auld guns they had amang them. As suin as Paddy cummed in sicht Wully Mucklewane lot bleeze wi' his blunnerbush, an' jist wi' that the tithers put lichta tae the whuns. Save my heart, but the nicht o' the fires ower the passin' o' the Lan' Bill wuz naethin' ava tae it. The fowk cheered, an' the fellas fired aff their guns till ye cud not a heerd yer ain ears.

It wuz nae easy jab gettin' Paddy an his mistress an' the waens inside the hoose, but they tuk the shovin' an' pushin' a' in guid pert. We had a pletform put up an' cuvered wi' a kerpet that Mistress Forgeyson lent us, an' they made me gie Mistress M'Queelan my erm an' eskort her up tae her sate. The cheers o' the fowk wuz maist sayries, an' it wuz a guid while afore they got quatened doon. Whun the blissin' wuz axed they begood tae the eatin', an' A hae described Bellycuddy tay-perties sae affen tae ye that A neednae tak' up yer time wi' it noo. Ivery thing wuz first rate.

A'm shair nae man there tuk sich a feed as Jamey Menyarry. Jamey haes a terble big mooth, an' whun he's lauchin' ye wudnae think he wuz lauchin' ava, but that he wuz makin' faces, as we ca' it. Weel, at the table whaur he wuz sittin' there wuz a wumen nursin' a waen, an' it begood tae roar.

"What ails ye, dear?" sez its ma.

"That man's girnin' at me," sez the wee thing.

"A em not, indeed," sez Jamey, "A'm jest lauchin' at that big curned loaf!"

Whun the tay wuz ower, Wulyim M'Kome riz tae his feet, an' sez he—

"Ladies an' gentilmen, as Mister Gordin an' Paddy M'Queelan haes aye been sich guid freens, an' as this is the last meetin' that we're likely tae hae thegither, A beg tae move that Mister Gordin taks the cher."

That was saycondid an' passed by agglamation, an' so A tuk the ermcher on the pletform. They cried at me fur a speech, but A tell't them they had far better speekers nor me amang them that nicht, an' that A wud call on Mister Wullyim Mewhunyee, Justice o' the Peice, till apen the purceedins."

His wurship made a gran speech. He tell't them that altho' he wuz on the Binch he wuz nae skolerd an' didnae ken ocht aboot law, but whun the Lord Lifftenant seen fit fur tae gie him a Komishan frae her grashis Majisty the Queen, it wud a been bad menners in him fur tae refuse it. "A'm yin o' yersels," sez he, "bred an' born a puir fermer, but A hae wurkit hard an' sair, late an' early, an' wuz niver afeerd till stan' up fur my richts, an' speek my min' freely an' fearlessly till landlords, agents, or bailiffs. Blue bluid never scaured me, boys, an' sum o' the gentlemen that brags o' it stud forrit till get me on the binch. (Cries o' 'They wur feered o' ye !' an' grate cheerin'.) Weel, boys, ye cannae a' expect till get on in the wurl as A hae got on, nor ye cannae a' get Jaw Pee efter yer name, an' raily an' truly if things dinnae change A'm feered they'll hae tae bigg a wheen mair puirhooses. (No, no.) A hope no, A'm shair, but it luks mortyel like it. A'm shair we're a' sorry tae pert wi' my respektid freen Paddy M'Queelan an' his tidy, industris wife, Maggie. There's nae daicenter cupple in the townland. (Loud cheers.) But while A'm sorry tae loas him A'm boun' till say that A admire him fur his pluck. He wud niver be wurth ocht here, an' nicht spen' his auld days in the wurkhouse whaur the gerdyins wudnae even allow him the privilege o' seein' his faithful an' affeckshinit wee wife. (Cries o' 'Shame !' an' 'Doon wi' the wurkhooses !') In the cuntry he's gaun till there's room fur him an' plenty mair fine fellas like him. Wi' a' my heart A wush him an' his femily lang life an' prosperity, an' may the name o' M'Queelan gang doon throo a' posterity." (Grate cheerin'.)

"Whun his Wurship sut doon, yin o' the kommittee men cummed forrit till me an' sez he—

"Mister Cherman, may it please yer honour, a wheen o' the boys want till mak Mistress M'Queelan a prayshuntashin, an' A think this wudnae be the waurst time till dae it."

"Wi' a' my heart," sez I. Then A cried the fowk tae order an' tell't them that sum freens o' Paddy's wantit till gie him a mark o' their respect till carry wi' him across the seas, an' A concluded by callin' on whaiver had cherge o' the matter till step forrit.

Mister Wulyim M'Kome stud up wi' that, an' apened oot a percel that lukit like a pikter. It wuz a gran' address, framed, an' gless on it. He said he wuz gaun till read it oot, so that a' the fowk wud hear it, an' so A made him get up ontill the pletform. He redd it rael weel, an' this wuz what it said—

" Address an' praysentation to Mistress Margaret M'Queelan on the occasion o' her depertyur frae Bellycuddy for Canada.

" Dear Mem, we, a wheen o' the auld freens, neibours, an' raysedenturs o' you an' yer gude man, Mister Paddy M'Queelan, begs maist respektfully tae embrace this appertunity o' offerin' ye a mark o' oor gude wull, freenships an' respekt noo that yer gaun awa, mebee niver till be back amang us again. Ye wur baith o' ye brocht up amang us, an' neerly ivery yin here kens ye since ye wudnae auder nor yer twa wee twuns. We cudnae tell ye hoo muckle we a' like Paddy, an' we're shair he cud a got nae better wife nor Miss Maggie Patton o' Kilwuddy. We ax ye, mem, fur till aksept o' the accompanyin' goold chane as a token o' the grate likin' we a' hae fur ye. We hope that ye'll a' get on weel in the new hame yer gaun till, an' that yer wee son Paddy may yit cum till be the guvornor o' Canada the same as Lord Dufferin wuz. If iver ye cum back agen till Bellycuddy ye'll be heartily welkim, but we suppoas we need harly tell ye that.

" Signed on behalf o' the subscribers,

" SAM BROON, Chairman.

" WULYIM M'KOME, Seekaterrier.

" JAMES MUKLEWANE, Treasurer."

There wuz grate cheerin' whun A hung the chane roon Maggie's neck, an' the crayter didnae ken whaur she wuz sittin' A'm shair. The fowk cried on Paddy fur to mak' a speech, an' it wuznae lang till he wuz on his feet.

" My freens," sez he, " ye hae cleen tuk the breth frae me. If ye had a tell't me ye wur gaun tae dae this, A wud a haen sumthin' reddy till say tae ye, but on this present occasion A'm no prepared. Hooiniver, A'll say yin thing, an' that is that A'm gled ye made the present till Maggie. That pleeses me better, boys, nor if ye had a gien me the hale toonlan' o' Bellycuddy. (Cheers.) Boys, A'll niver forget the times we hae spent thegither, an' gang whaur A

wull A'll aye hae a kin'ly thocht fur the auld cuntry. If Guid spare us till gether a bit money we'll be back tae ye, fur A wud like tae lie in the Kirkyard wi' oor ain fowk. (Cheers.) Wi' these few remarks, an' thankin' ye a' fur yer grate kindness, A'll noo sit doon. (Grate cheerin'.)

Efter that the dancin' begood, an' it wuz daylight afore we braue up. The fowk a' shuk han's wi' Paddy an' his mistress, an' a halk lot o' them promised tae see them aff in the train.

An' so they did. There wuz a sayries crowd at the rileway station, an' ye wud harly a seen a dry cheek. Jest as the train started we a' gied three cheers fur Paddy an' his mistress, an' the crayter stud wi' his heid oot o' the wundey wavin' his hat till the train wuz oot o' sicht.

He promised he wud write till me an' tell me hoo he got on. If he diz, A'll let ye heer his letter. Dear dear, but A'm sorry he's awa'!